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AN

ESSAY

ON THE

Age and Antiquity

OF

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THE BOOK

OF

NABATHÆAN AGRICULTURE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

81888

An Inaugural Lecture

ON THE

POSITION OF THE SHEMITIC NATIONS

IN THE

HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION.

T. d. 15

BY

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PREFACE.

THE BOOK OF NABATHÆAN AGRICULTURE was first introduced to the notice of Europe by St. Thomas Aquinas, towards the middle of the thirteenth century, though it had already been cited by Moses Maimonides in the *More Nevochim* some hundred years previously, from whence, no doubt, it had become known to most of the learned Spanish Jews who, at the period, shed so great a lustre upon Hebrew Literature and Biblical Science.

Startling as it is to find in its pages mention of a literature and civilization so

far beyond the earliest records of the Bible and other known sources of information, it has ever since been treated, when not passed over in utter oblivion, more as one of the curiosities of literature than as a valuable record of the past; and though slightly referred to by Salmasius, about two centuries ago, in a way which might have opened up a controversy as to the authenticity and date of its supposed antiquity and authorship, the matter seems to have been allowed to fall still-born from the press. This may in some way be accounted for by the ignorance of scholars before our day of the principles of Comparative Grammar, that ingenious art of criticism which becomes the key by which modern philology is enabled to enter the deep recesses of the past, and expose to view records which, for want of it, were inaccessible to the ancient

Greeks and Romans and the great scholars of the last three centuries; as, ignorant of it, the former were even unable to decipher the earliest remains of their own language, and the latter could only supply its place by conjectural guesses.

One of the most successful workers in this new field of criticism is Dr. Daniel Chwolson, Professor of Hebrew in the University of St. Petersburgh, who first made himself known to Oriental scholars by the publication of one of the most able and profound works connected with the history and literature of the East which has ever appeared. *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*—the Sabians and Sabian Worship—has for ever settled many doubtful and long-disputed points in religion; has thrown new and irresistible light upon earlier Eastern history; and placed its author at once in the

highest rank as one of the deepest thinkers and most painstaking critics of the day.

The real Sabians, the as-Sábiún of the Koran, were an Aramaic or Syro-Chaldæan race, on the borders of Persia, inhabiting the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates. These heathen had El-Hasaih as the founder of their religion. He is the Ἠλχασαί of Hippolytus, the Elkesai of Theodoretus, and the Ἠλξαί or Ἠλξαίος of Epiphanius, and taught the doctrine of two principles in the Creation, a male and a female, active and passive power, mind and matter. Mání was brought up in this creed, but, drawing nearer to the doctrines of Zoroaster or Parsee-ism, preached a second duality, Good and Evil, and thus became the founder of Manichæism, which still lingers amongst the Yesides, and is so graphically portrayed by Mr. Layard. The Sabians derive their name

from the Hebrew word צבע, 'to dip,' and it was applied to the followers of El-Hasaih in reference to their frequent ablutions. Their present representatives are the Mendaïtes, Gnostics, Nazoreans, or, incorrectly, Christians of St. John, so called from their frequent lustrations with water, who dwell in the swamps on the banks of the Tigris near Bassora.

Besides the Sabians, there were others who took the name, about the year 830 of our era, to escape the persecutions of the Chalifs, particularly of El-Ma'mún, who threatened them with extermination; assuming at the same time something of the dress and forms of the persecuting Mussulmans. These pseudo-Sabians are represented by the modern Yesidis and the Shemsiya, both of whom are fire-worshippers, or perhaps, rather, worshippers of

the sun and the planets, at heart, though the first profess a kind of bastard Islamism, and the latter, since about the year 1762, a mongrel Christianity. These pseudo-Sabians dwelt in the land of Harran, and their descendants have become familiar to us by the narratives of Layard and Southgate, and some recent discussions as to the site of the well of Harran in the *Athenæum*.

In collecting together and examining his materials for this important work, Professor Chwolson necessarily had to dip deeply into the sources of old Babylonian or Nabathæan literature, greatly encouraged in the pursuit by the previous labours of M. Quatremère;[1] and men, who were fully competent to judge of his high linguistic attainments, began to look anxiously for-

[1] *Mémoire sur les Nabatéens*, in the *Journal Asiatique*, 1835 reprinted in the *Mélanges d'Histoire et de Philologie Orientale*.

ward to the time when the fruits of this industry should be placed before them. To quiet the many enquiries on that head, in 1859 there appeared in the *Memoirs des Savants Etrangers* of St. Petersburgh, and also in a separate form, *Ueber die Ueberreste der Altbabylonischen Literatur in Arabischen Uebersetzungen*, a curious and startling work "On the Remains of Old Babylonian Literature, preserved in Arabic translations;" and it is that work which has given rise to this essay of M. Ernest Renan, which is now presented to the English reader, with his sanction, in its present form.

In his introductory chapter, Dr. Chwolson puts forth two questions:—1. Could the Babylonians have possessed an extensive literature of high order in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, or of the earlier Nebonassar? 2. Was it possible that in Babylon

there should have existed an advanced state of science, at a time when Grecian literature and science were both in their infancy? Professor Chwolson answers both questions, knowingly and advisedly, in the affirmative. Such a deduction would go far to shake the faith of Jews and Christians in the Divine origin of the sacred books of the Old Testament, and hence the cartel thrown down by the Professor has brought forth many replies on the Continent, to which reference is made in the pages of M. Renan's unanswerable essay; and also three important reviews of the work in this country, of which that in the *Christian Remembrancer* of April, 1860, claims precedence as to date, and that in the *Saturday Review* of September, in the same year, as to matter; both, however, highly instructive papers to all who take interest in a subject of such

paramount importance. M. Renan's essay is contemporary with the latter, and appeared in the *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions, et Belles-Lettres*, Tome XXIV., in 1860. The third review is a notice of this memoir, which appeared in the *Times* on the last day of January in the present year, under the heading of "Pre-Adamite Literature," which gives a masterly analysis of the whole subject.[1]

Husbandry was the first and earliest of the sciences to which man turned his attention, and our common father, when he

[1] The translator of the *Strange Surprising Adventures of the Venerable Gooro Simple*, published in 1860, in reference to the antiquity of Eastern legends, says: "Dr. Chwolson has recently issued a very curious and interesting volume on the remains of ancient Babylonian literature. According to it, a person named Kúthámí compiled a well-planned and ably executed work on general literature fourteen centuries before the Christian era, giving us glimpses of a previous civilization of some three thousand years. We are promised the Arabic text accompanied by a translation. When these appear we shall have more certain data than mere conjectural criticism for fixing dates. Kúthámí, it seems, speaks of '*the ancients*,' the writers of periods then long passed away, as we do of the authors of classical antiquity."

began to "eat bread in the sweat of his face," the first husbandman. Hence it is but natural to suppose that the earliest of the sciences should have been handed down from generation to generation in a religious form; and, when first reduced to writing, that it should have retained that form. So we arrive at the conclusion that the earliest literature of which we have any traces, very properly combined in itself the principles of worship and progress, of religion and civilization. It is just this form which gives such an air of high antiquity to "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," and which has induced Dr. Chwolson to ask: "Had Greek literature been completely lost to the world during the dark ages which followed the fall of the Roman Empire, and now, for the first time, the works of Plato and Aristotle, of Hippocrates and

Galen, of Euclid and others, become known to us only by Arabic versions in which they really exist, should we not probably suspect them to be forgeries, and exclaim against the possibility of the Greeks having had so cultivated a literature four centuries before Christ, when our own forefathers were in a state of dense darkness, in which they continued comparatively for some fifteen centuries afterwards, though their connection with classical antiquity was by no means dissolved?" As this might well have happened in regard to Greek literature, he asks us not to look upon as forgeries authentic documents, brought to light by similar agency, respecting a pre-existing ante-Grecian culture.

In M. Ernest Renan, Professor Chwolson has met an opponent at all points his equal in rank and in erudition. The Oriental

Professor of the College of France has raised to himself a name no less celebrated as the author of the *Histoire des Langues Sémitiques*, than his rival did by his publication of the *Ssabier und der Ssabismus*. Born in Brittany in 1823, he was educated for holy orders, and all his impulses are essentially the results of that education, though very early he found that he could not pursue his studies for the priesthood with a clear conscience. Since the age of twenty-four, when in 1847 he gained the Volney prize for his essay on the Shemitic languages, he has devoted himself to letters, and ranks as one of the greatest French writers now living. Under the present Emperor of the French he has been employed to carry out researches in Phœnicia, and is at this moment engaged in preparing for press a great work on Phœnician An-

tiquities. M. Renan belongs to those religious thinkers who are known as the "advanced school." Hence the public, generally, in France, heard with something like astonishment of his appointment to the chair of the Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Syriac Languages in the College of France, as the successor of M. Quatremère. They were partly prepared, also, for the result of his inaugural lecture—the suspension of further lectures. This proceeding is one of much importance in the literary history of Europe, and that importance has been the sole inducement to add an English version of the lecture to the present volume. M. Renan is compiling a life of Christ, and the history of the origin of Christianity, a great portion of which was written amidst the scenes to which it has immediate reference. His peculiar views are as well known

to the educated classes of France and Germany, from his *Etudes d'Histoire Religieuse* and his *Essais de Morale et de Critique*, as are those of Professor Jowett in this country, from his contribution to the *Essays and Reviews*. With these the translator no way identifies the presentation to the reader, in an English dress, of M. Renan's Essay on "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," and of the "Inaugural Lecture on the Position of the Shemitic Nations in the History of Civilization." All the merit claimed is an earnest endeavour to reproduce both works in a faithful rendering of the originals.

June, 1862.

AGE AND ANTIQUITY

OF THE BOOK OF

NABATHÆAN AGRICULTURE.

THERE is no longer any doubt in the present age, that a Babylonian literature did exist, composed of works connected with the arts and sciences, which are nearly always written in a religious form. The age and the character of the intellectual labours of the Chaldæans are uncertain; but there are many evidences, more especially in the monuments that have descended to our days, to prove that Babylon was, from the most remote antiquity, the centre of civilization for all the East. Indeed, although it might appear at the first glance that the literature of Babylon had disap-

peared; although there is no original text remaining of writings composed by the different schools of Chaldæa; still, the literature of neighbouring nations, which met with a better fate, has preserved to us considerable remains of the culture it replaced. Without mentioning those Greek authors who have written Ἀσσυριακά and Βαβυλωνικά from original sources; or Armenian writers, especially Moses Chororensis, who frequently mentions Chaldæan writings; or the Syrian Christians, whom we continually find, during the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries, waging never ending controversies against the Chaldæans; or the Talmud, and kindred writings, which contain large portions of astronomical, and possibly of medical principles borrowed from Babylon; or the Cabbala, of which both the principles and the most ancient forms, although under many transformations, can be traced to Chaldæa; or Gnosticism, which, in one of its branches, shews the degree of influence that Babylonian doctrines possessed in the midst of that vast

chaos of ideas into which the East was plunged during the first centuries of our era,—we have still, in three or four forms, writings of Babylonian origin. And first, Berosus, although of the epoch of the Seleucides, was not the less a purely Babylonian writer, and the fragments which have come down to us of his works, although they require to be treated with the greatest caution, are, with the cosmogonies preserved by Damascius and by the author of the Φιλοσοφούμενα, invaluable remains of Chaldæan philosophy. Secondly, a class of writings—very contemptible certainly if we only regard the depth of their ideas,—the writings composed in Greek and Arabic on astrology, magic, oneirocriticism, such as the Cyranides, the works of the false Zoroaster, the books attributed to Seth, and to Noah, the fragments of Paxamus, of Teucer the Babylonian, and of Lasbas the Babylonian,[1]

[1] Fabricii Bibl. Gr. Harles IV. p. 148, 166, etc. See hereafter my conjecture on Teucer. On Lasbas on Μέσλας, and on the book, certainly a Babylonian one, called Σέλεχ βίβλος, see Miller, "Journal des Savans," October 1839, p. 607, note.

are frequently translations or copies of Chaldæan works. Thirdly, the works of the sect known as Mendaïtes, Nazoreans, Christians of St. John, who must be classed generally under the name Sabians, represent to us, to a certain degree, in their method of thought, and possibly in their language, the remains of Babylonian literature; though the flights of imagination from which the ancient Chaldæans never appear to have been wholly exempt, assume in them such a point of extravagance, that it would be with reluctance that we would acknowledge these fanciful wanderings to be the actual remains of an intellectual cultivation which has exercised so considerable an influence on the mind of man.

A source more fertile, however, than any which we have hitherto pointed out, has been opened to us in these last few years. Ingenious criticism has shewn that it is in the heart of Arabian literature that we must seek for the most precious collection of Babylonian writings. Independently of

the numerous facts which can be deduced from Arabian historians and general writers on ancient Babylon, there exists in Arabic a series of writings translated from the Babylonian or Nabathæan language. All these translations were the work of one man. Towards the year 900 of our era, a descendant of those ancient Babylonian families who had fled to the marshes of Wasith and of Bassora, where their posterity still dwell, was struck with profound admiration for the works of his ancestors, whose language he understood, and probably spoke. Ibn Wahshíya al-Kasdani, or the Chaldæan (such was the name of this individual), was a Mussulman, but Islamism only dated in his family from the time of his great-grandfather; he hated the Arabs, and cherished the same feeling of national jealousy towards them as the Persians also entertained against their conquerors. A piece of good fortune threw into his hands a large collection of Nabathæan writings, which had been rescued from Moslem fanaticism. The zealous Chal-

dæan devoted his life to their translation, and thus created a Nabathæo-Arabic library, of which three complete works—to say nothing of the fragments of a fourth—have descended to our days. The three complete works are, first, كتاب الفلاحة النبطية "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture;" second, كتاب السموم "The Book of Poisons;" third, كتاب تنكلوشا البابلي "The Book of Tenkelúshá the Babylonian." The incomplete work is كتاب اسرار الشمس والقمر "A work on the Secrets of the Sun and Moon."[1] Of these four books, "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" is by far the most important and the most interesting. It is this one which will now principally occupy our attention.

[1] The first is a cyclopædia of agriculture, containing also remarks and dissertations on subjects incidentally mentioned, and it is these which give it the pre-eminence. The second, which is older than the first, treats of poisons and their antidotes. The third is a genethlialogic work. The fourth treats of plants and metals.—*Translator's note.*

CHAPTER I.

"THE Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," first referred to in Europe by St. Thomas Aquinas, was first known among Christian scholars, thanks to the quotations made from it by Jewish writers of the middle ages, particularly by Moses Maïmonides in his "More Nevochim." The impression formed of it, from this source of information, was, however, very imperfect. Some supposed that the book treated of the religion of the Nabathæans, the word עבורה, by which the Hebrew translator of Moses Maïmonides rendered عبادة, permitting the double sense of *cultus*, or *cultura*. Others supposed there were two distinct works, one on Nabathæan Agriculture, and one on the Religion of the Nabathæans. Moreover, by a confusion easily made between the name of the Copts (قبط)

and that of the Nabathæans[1] (نبط), the title of Egyptian Agriculture was frequently substituted for Nabathæan Agriculture, and the editor of the Greek Geoponica,[2] J. N. Niclas, even supposed, in 1781, that "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" was nothing but a translation of the work of which he published the original text.

A more exact idea was given of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," when Don Josef Antonio Banqueri published at Madrid, in 1802, the Treatise on Agriculture of Ibn-el-Awwam, which is a kind of abridgment from "The Nabathæan Agriculture." But the historical interest of the original work entirely disappeared in the abridgment of Ibn-el-Awwam.

It was my learned brother, M. Quatremère, who first[3] studied in its original text

[1] These ancient errors are collected and discussed in Stanley, "Histoire de la Philosophie Orientale," with notes, by J. Leclerc. pp. 120-121, and Index, at the word *Nabateen*.

[2] Geoponica, sive Libri de Re Rustica; 4 vols. Lips. 1781.

[3] Herbelot had examined the manuscript, but in an extremely superficial manner. See "Bibliotheque Orientale," at the words Yahashiah, Nabathi, Cothai, Falahat, Democratis.

the work which now engages our attention.[1] Unfortunately, out of the nine parts or books into which "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" is divided, the Paris manuscript (*Ancien Fonds Arabe*, No. 913), only contains two, being about one-third of the entire work. By examining the portion thus at his disposal, M. Quatremère ascertained the various features of the work. He saw that "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" was a translation from a Chaldæan author. He fixed, with much hesitation however, the name of the original author as Kúthámí. He gathered from the treatise in question much curious information as to the civilization of the Nabathæans. He shewed that "The Agriculture" contained much more than its mere title promised, and threw most valuable light on the ancient literature of Babylon. Finally, he promulgated an opinion as to the epoch of the composition of the work, which ap-

[1] "Memoire sur les Nabateens," inserted in the "Journal Asiatique," 1835. Since reprinted in the "Melanges d'Histoire et de Philologie Orientale," edited by M. Barthélemey Saint Hilaire.

peared at first sight altogether paradoxical. Surprised at the omission, in the midst of ample information as to the religions of Asia, of one word which directly or indirectly bore reference to Christianity; struck by the perfection of the agricultural theories which are developed in every page; and not being able to find any one period in Babylonian history after Alexander where such prosperity could correctly be placed,—remarking: 1st, that the author speaks of Babylon as being, in his own day, a flourishing city, and the seat of the principal religion of the East; 2nd, that he speaks of Nineveh as a city still in existence; 3rd, that among the cities situated in Babylon and the neighbouring provinces, he makes no mention of Seleucia, Apamea, Ctesiphon, and other cities founded by the Seleucides, the Arsacides, the Sassanides; and not recognising the possibility that, at a time when that vast cyclopædia of agriculture was written, Babylon could be under a foreign yoke, M. Quatremère finds himself compelled to fix

the composition of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" at an extremely early date.

"It is," he says, "very probable, if I am not altogether mistaken, that this book was written during the period which elapsed between the emancipation of Babylon from the Median yoke, by Belesis, and the taking of Babylon by Cyrus. Perhaps even one might venture to fix the exact date as in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar the Second. It is a very natural hypothesis, that a great prince, who carried his victorious arms to such remote lands; who embellished his capital by immense works; who ordered the construction of numberless canals, destined to spread fertility and abundance over the most distant parts of his hereditary states; should wish to complete and perpetuate his work by ordering the composition of a vast library, which should comprise all that the experience of many centuries had taught, as to the productions of Chaldæa, and the means of developing and increasing its natural resources."

Such a deduction was certain to excite astonishment. It was contradicted first by the learned historian of botany, Prof. E. H. F. Meyer, of the University of Königsberg.[1] Prof. Meyer refused to acknowledge the remote antiquity of a composition so scientifically arranged, so diffuse, and bearing the marks of science rather in its decay than in its early rise. Various peculiarities appeared to him to add great weight to this theory. For instance, one of the works quoted in "The Agriculture" was written in rhyme; now rhyme is never found among the Shemitic nations, till from the end of the fifth to the sixth century of our era; many names of plants in the translation of Ibn Wahshíya are taken from the Greek; the whole theory of the book bears a strong resemblance to that of the Greek and Latin agriculturists; the astronomy which it promulgates contains notions which were not popular till the Roman

[1] "Geschichte der Botanik," t. III. (Königsberg, 1856), p. 43 and following.

epoch; and finally, the perpetual boastings of Kúthámí, his national vanity, his jealousy of foreign nations, traits which recall to mind forcibly the tendency of the spirit of the East at the opening of our era, convince Prof. Meyer that the author had consulted Greek authors, but that he designedly ignored their names, in order to secure for the Babylonians the credit of priority in all scientific and industrial inventions. Prof. Meyer declares that, if he were obliged to fix a date for "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," he should fix it in the first century of our era, consequently seven or eight centuries after the period in which M. Quatremère has placed it.

It seems natural, in such a state of things, to split up the question, and apply to it a method, generally successful, when the great works of antiquity are subjected to it. It might be possible that, in regarding "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" as a composition of the materials of different ages—modern in its latest form, but ancient as re-

gards its source, the apparent contradictions of the work could be reconciled. It was in pursuance of this idea that I ventured[1] to throw some doubt on the antiquity of the compilation of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," while willingly admitting that it might contain a certain amount of very ancient matter. Professor Ewald agrees with me in thinking that the book might be considered as the work of successive hands and many revisions.[2] It is, he contends, the sole method of defending the antiquity of some parts of the book against the overwhelming objections which arise from some others where the influence of Alexandrian Hellenism cannot possibly be ignored. As to the conjecture of M. Paul de Lagarde,[3] formerly hazarded by M. J. Niclas, according to which "The Nabathæan Agriculture" was nothing but a translation

[1] "Histoire générale des Lanques Semitiques" (1855), l. III. c. ii. sect. 1; and in the "Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions," t. XXIII., 2nd part, p. 330 (1858).

[2] "Gœttingen gel. Anzeigen" (1857, Nos. 9 and 10); 1859, p. 1456.

[3] "De Geoponica vers. Syriaca" (Lipsiæ, 1855), pp. 18, 19 and 24.

of the Greek Geoponica, of which there is a Syriac version in the British Museum, being founded on a misunderstanding, it may be dismissed at once.

A scholar, already known by one of the most important works which Oriental learning has produced of late years, Prof. Chwolson, of St. Petersburgh, the author of a work on the Sabian Religion and the School of Harran, has just taken a decisive step towards the solution of the question which occupies us. Having had access to and consulted all the manuscripts of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" which exist in the various libraries of Europe, Dr. Chwolson has made the most perfect copy of it possible,[1] and, in order to quiet the impatience of the literary world till the publication of this revised text, he has embodied in a memoir an abstract of the results of his researches.[2]

[1] Dr. Chwolson has informed me by a letter, that the *lacuna* which remained in his copy at the time of the publication of his memoir has been filled up. The existence of four new manuscripts of "The Nabathæan Agriculture" at Constantinople has been announced.

[2] "Ueber die Ueberreste der Altbabylonischen Literatur in

There is reason to regret, however, that this eminent Oriental scholar, instead of giving us a treatise on the text, which he alone has consulted, should not have rather first published the text itself. The position of a critic is extremely painful when he is obliged to combat the opinions which a conscientious scholar has formed on a work which he alone has read in its entirety, and from which he only gives extracts which bear out his own theory. Until "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" is published in its full integrity, the judgment brought to bear on the subject must be received with great allowance. Nevertheless, so great is the interest of the question, that thanks are due to Dr. Chwolson for having forestalled the tedious delay inseparable from a publication so voluminous as that of "The Book of Nabathæan

Arabischen Uebersetzungen" (1859), extracted from vol. VIII. of "Memoires des Savants etrangers," of the Academy of St. Petersburg. Dr. Chwolson has already announced these results in his "Ssabier" (1856), vol. I., p. 705, and vol. II., pp. 910 and 911; and in the "Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländen Gesellschaft," 1857, pp. 583 ff.

Agriculture." Besides, so strong is the conviction of Dr. Chwolson; so great the sincerity with which he lays bare the objections which may be made to it, that his work furnishes the means of criticising his own opinions. It is needless, to add, that to dissent from him on such a subject cannot diminish those sentiments of acknowledgment and esteem which are due to a scholar who was the first to open up such a series of investigations. Dr. Chwolson, in turning the attention of critics to facts and texts too much disregarded before, fully merits to be called their originator; and it would be unjust to forget, that if his opinions are combatted, it is with weapons which he himself has furnished, and on ground which he himself has prepared. And even if his opinion as to the age of the Nabathæan books should hereafter be given up, it will be no more a discredit to him than is a similar bold opinion a stain on the glory of the great Indian scholars of Calcutta, regarding the antiquity of works, which they

had the rare merit of first making known to Europeans.

The statement of the opinion of Dr. Chwolson as to the period of the composition of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" will, no doubt, excite the greatest astonishment among persons who have already been startled by the less bold hypothesis of M. Quatremère. It resolves itself into two propositions: firstly, that Kúthámí, the Babylonian, is the sole author of the work in question; that the work itself is not the compilation of various hands; and that it has received from the Arabian translator only alterations of very little importance; secondly, that Kúthámí could not have written it later than the beginning of the thirteenth century before Christ.

It is not, however, *a priori* that such an opinion can be combatted. In the field of historical criticism, all should be admitted as possible. Civilization and literature flourished in Babylon at a very ancient period. Entire systems of civilization have

disappeared without leaving any traces; literatures of high antiquity are only represented by shreds, passed through a thousand transformations, and are scarcely recognisable. I willingly admit that Babylon may have had books and schools fifteen centuries before Christ. The title of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" to the high antiquity which Dr. Chwolson attributes to it, must be sifted without bias of any kind.

Dr. Chwolson's principal argument is derived from the information furnished by "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" as to the political condition of Babylonia at the time when the work was composed. He agrees with M. Quatremère, that it contains no trace of the existence of Christianity, or of the existence of Arsacidan, Seleucidan, and Sassanidan rule. Twenty Babylonian kings are enumerated in "The Agriculture," and of these twenty names, there is not one which coincides with that of a king of any known Babylonian dynasty. In the chapter

on Canals (*Canalisation*), there is not a single allusion to Nebuchadnezzar, who did so much for the irrigation of the country; not one word of the Jews, who, in the beginning of that monarch's reign, filled so important a part in the East. A Canaanite dynasty, resulting from some recent conquest, reigned in Babylon in Kúthámí's time. Kúthámí frequently alludes to this main point. The founder of this Canaanite dynasty was Númrúda, whom Dr. Chwolson considers identical with the Nimrod of the Book of Genesis. The Canaanites are represented as a people originally inhabiting the South of Syria and the country of Jordan. The author speaks of these conquerors with marked reserve; at times he even appears to wish to flatter them, and to soften the prejudices which his own countrymen entertain against them. He gives the names of the Canaanite kings, Númrúda, Zahmúna, Súsikyá, Salbámá; he quotes Canaanite authors, Anúhá, Thámithri, etc. At what epoch, then, must

this Canaanite dynasty be placed, which, pretty much as the Hyksos did in Egypt, must have interrupted the series of native dynasties of Chaldæa? For various reasons Dr. Chwolson has concluded to identify it with the fifth of Berosus, composed of nine Arabian kings, of which he fixes the commencement between the years 1540 and 1488 before Christ. Kúthámí appears to have written one or two hundred years after the Canaanite invasion; the year 1300 is therefore the latest which can be suggested as that of the composition of the work which bears his name.

The astonishment excited by this conclusion is heightened by the circumstance that the author of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" quotes a great number of works, which themselves, again, have quotations from other authors; thus suggesting whole centuries of culture and civilization before the time of Kúthámí. Professor Chwolson considers that a culture of some 3000 years must be admitted before his

author flourished. In separating into their respective classes the quotations which are mingled together in the "Agriculture," he finds at Babylon a rich and varied literature, fully equal to that which was developed among the Greeks one or two thousand years later; a matured literature, full of controversies of schools, of sects, and of disputes between religion and philosophy. It is not here a question, in fact, as to one of those primitive literatures, which do not discover the identity of an author, and where an abstract genius seems to wield the pen for an entire nation. The writers of Babylon must have been thinkers with distinct views, discussing step by step, and in the minutest details, the opinions of their adversaries. The founders of Babylonian religions must have been philosophers gifted with clear perceptions, amicably opposing each other, and debating one and all, like academical professors. The work of Kúthámí is, in this wise, not a first book, but a work of recapitulation and

criticism. In the foreground appears the chief personage of Babylonian literature, a certain Yanbúshádh, founder of natural sciences and originator of a kind of Monotheism. He is separated from Kúthámí by four or five centuries. Some ages before Yanbúshádh, appears Daghrith, founder of another school, which had some disciples, even after Yanbúshádh. This Daghrith lived, according to Dr. Chwolson, two thousand years before Christ; and speaks of various persons of Babylonian tradition in a manner which shows that he then considered them as men of early antiquity. Indeed, long before Daghrith, there is another age of literature, of which the representatives are Másí the Suranian, his disciple Jernáná, and the Canaanites, Anúhá, Thámithrí, and Sardáná (towards 2500). All these sages appear at once as priests, founders of religions, moralists, naturalists, astronomers, agriculturalists (*agronomes*), and as universally endeavouring to introduce a worship freed from idolatrous superstitions.

A short time before them Ishithá flourished, the founder of a religion which Kúthámí vehemently opposes, though he acknowledges that it exercised, in his own time, a salutary influence. Before Ishithá, Adamí appears as the founder of agriculture in Babylon, acting the part of a civilizer (*civilisateur*) and hence named "The Father of Mankind." Before him we find Azada, the founder of a religion which the higher classes persecuted, but which was cherished by the lower; Ankebúthá, Samáï-Nahari, the poet Húhúshi, whose attention was already directed to agricultural science; Askúlebithá, a benefactor of mankind and the earliest astronomer; and finally Dewánáï, the most ancient lawgiver of the Shemites, who had temples, was honoured as a god, and was called "Master of Mankind." The age of Dewánáï is, according to Dr. Chwolson, strictly historical, and Babylon was already, at that time, a completely organised state. There are indications, before Dewánáï, of great efforts towards civiliza-

tion; and it is in that distant period that Professor Chwolson places Kámásh-Nahari, the author of a work on agriculture; the saints and favourites of the gods, Aámi, Súlina, Thúlúni, Resáï, Kermáná, etc.; and finally the martyr Tammúzi, the first to found the religion of the planets, who was put to death, and afterwards lamented by his followers. Dr. Chwolson stops here: he acknowledges that before that period all fades into the mist of fabulous antiquity.

Certainly, to many persons, the promulgation of such a system would be its surest refutation. Indeed, the assertions of Prof. Chwolson assume an aspect to which persons who adopt the usual principles of criticism are quite unaccustomed. Such, however, is the singular chain of evidence which has led Dr. Chwolson to adopt this system; so great is the authority which his opinion seems to derive from that of M. Quatremère; that it becomes the duty of criticism to examine his assertions step by step, without resting on the improbability

which they offer at a first glance. I shall now proceed to place before you the objections which, on a careful perusal of Dr. Chwolson's Memoir, I have to urge against the position which he endeavours to maintain.

CHAPTER II.

To begin, one circumstance, foreign to, and no way conducive to the examination of the book itself, is of a nature to inspire doubts as to the legitimacy of the deductions of M. Quatremère and Dr. Chwolson. Ibn Wahshíya translated "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" into Arabic in the year 904 of our era. The original text is universally admitted to have been in Aramaic. Two thousand two hundred years, therefore, according to Prof. Chwolson's theory,—seventeen hundred years according to that of M. Quatremère,—must have elapsed between the composition of the work and its translation. Such an instance is without parallel at any period before philology is organised into a regular science. Only

consider of what an archaical character the Aramaic text must have appeared to a Chaldæan in the tenth century of our era. Though it may be urged that the Shemitic languages varied very little in the course of their prolonged existence; or to quote, as a case in point, the Moallakats, as being still well understood among Arabs, after the lapse of 1300 years: the political and religious revolutions of Chaldæa have been too sweeping for the possibility of its language preserving such an identity. The philologists of antiquity, and those of the middle ages, being ignorant of the principles of comparative grammar, were not able to interpret the archaical remains of their own language. I might add also that the preservation of a work of the nature of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," during two or three thousand years, is extremely improbable. Such a preservation may be credited, in the case of scriptural writings, when they have become classical, but not in that of an ordinary work, written in a care-

less, diffuse, bald style, full of minute discussions and extraneous matter. Books of this kind do not remain intact during many generations of copyists. They grow with the times; or, to speak more correctly, they have only a limited fame, and are replaced by other treatises which are found more suitable, or believed to be more complete.

This is but a prejudicial view of the case; it is from the examination of the book itself that one must expect more convincing arguments. It will be confessed, however, that the opinion which attributes such remote antiquity to "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" must be abandoned, if I succeed in proving that its author understood Greek science, the institutions of more advanced (*achimedienne*) Persia, and the Jewish traditions in their apocryphal and legendary form. Now these three points I trust to be able to prove.

Prof. Chwolson acknowledges that a great number of Greek words occur in the translation of Ibn Wahshíya, especially when

it treats of the nomenclature of plants;[1] but he meets the difficulties which this peculiarity presents, difficulties which Prof. Meyer has already insisted on, with a general plea of rejection. He thinks that it is Ibn Wahshíya who has substituted the names in use in his own time for Nabathæan names, and that he has added to them their various synonymes. That is certainly by no means impossible. It must be remembered, however, that Ibn Wahshíya is neither a botanist nor an agronomist by profession. He is a translator, proud of the ancient literary glory of his race, and who translates alike every Nabathæan work which comes to hand. What would be natural in an agronomist, pre-occupied with the practical utility of his book, cannot be attributed to him. He never appears to endeavour to accommodate his translation to the exigency of his age, as is the usual case in an ordinary work. The Greek names given by Ibn Wahshíya, moreover, are not the vulgar, but

[1] Pp. 81, 82.

scientific names, which those alone could be acquainted with who were accustomed to handle those polyglot "Dioscorides" of which we possess copies. The Greek names of plants given by Ibn Wahshíya are found in the Syriac glossaries of Bar-Ali and of Bar-Bahlul, who probably had taken them from books analogous to the one translated by Ibn Wahshíya.

In all that treats of the names of towns and cities, M. Quatremère affirms that he has not found in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" the name of any of the Greek cities of the East. Dr. Chwolson[1] confesses that he has discovered one,—that of Antioch (*Anthakia*); but he thinks, according to his usual method, that it is only a modern name which Ibn Wahshíya has substituted for one more ancient: nothing can be more gratuitous. The Orientals have never made the name of *Anthakia* respond to any city but that founded by Seleucus Nicator; and we know, in the most precise manner, that

[1] Page 36.

when Seleucus founded his capital on the banks of the Orontes, he only found an insignificant place there, whose name even has not descended to us.[1]

Proofs stronger still establish satisfactorily, in my opinion, the fact that the author of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" had acquaintance with the writings of the Greeks. In various passages of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," which seem to have escaped the attention of M. Quatremère, there are allusions to the Yúnánís, and it is well known that it is by that name that the Arabs designate the ancient Greeks, in distinction to the Roumis, or modern Greeks. Dr. Chwolson gives a very unsatisfactory explanation of this difficulty. Starting from the supposition that the Hellenic race arrived in Asia Minor at a very remote period, he deduces from this supposed fact, that from the year 2500 before Christ—it will be seen presently that

[1] See Pausanias Damasus, Περὶ Ἀντιοχείας, in Müller's "Fragmenta Historiæ Græcæ," vol. iv. p. 467 ff.

M. Chwolson needs that especial date—the Ionians may have had dealings with the Babylonians.[1] But the passages, where there is mention of the Yúnánís, are quite at variance with such an explanation. The subject there is, in fact, that the Greeks were a learned nation, possessing a cultivated literature. Such passages do not carry us, I maintain, to the days of the Heraclituses and the Thales', who wrote scarcely anything, and whose writings had but little publicity; but to an epoch when the works of the Greek authors were spread throughout the East. In the chapter on the mallow,[2] the author, speaking of the properties of the plant and its uses in medicine, says that it belongs to *cold* plants, and adds: "The Greeks (يونانيون) are of another opinion; they think that this plant is moderately warm, that it alleviates pain, and that it softens hard tumours." Dr. Chwolson makes vain efforts to prove that we should not conclude from this that

[1] Page 86. [2] Page 88.

the Greeks had a scientific system of medicine at the time when "The Agriculture" was composed. Greece, he observes, might very well have had a popular pharmacopœia and such receipts as are found in the heroic age, 1500 years before Christ. Doubtless; but such popular pharmacopœias are not precisely such as are quoted in scientific books, and form a school. It is evident that it here treats of a written Botany, and posterior to Theophrastus. In the chapter on garlic, the author himself says:[1] "Concerning this plant, the Chaldæans tell many tales, in some of which the Greeks agree with them." Elsewhere the author exults in the coincidence which exists between the opinions of the Greeks and the Chaldæans as regards the influence of the moon on plants.[2] It is not clear that he treats here of a written, regular science no less of the Greeks than of the Chaldæans.

But the most striking passage in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" relating

[1] Pp. 88, 89. [2] Pp. 89–91.

to the Greeks is this. Concerning a plant called *bákásiá*,[1] the author adds: "This plant was brought to the climate of Babylon from the country of Ephèsus, a city of the Greeks." It is astonishing that Dr. Chwolson was not struck by such a passage, and that he has ventured to maintain that Ephesus could have been mentioned in a Babylonian document of the 12th century before Christ. It is of little importance whether Ephesus might have existed before that epoch, and even before the colony of Androcles, the son of Codrus, to whom its origin is ordinarily attributed. Criticism which entrenches itself obstinately in possibilities, careless of thus accumulating against itself improbabilities, is undoubtedly irrefutable; but it is no longer criticism. The difficulty which results to Dr. Chwolson by these allusions to the Greeks, which are found in "The Nabathæan Agriculture," becomes the more grave, from the fact, that the Greeks are mentioned not only

[1] Page 89.

by Kúthámí, but by one of the authors whom he quotes, Másí the Suranian. According to Dr. Chwolson's theory, Másí cannot have lived later than two thousand years before Christ.[1] One is naturally curious to know at what day the Greeks could have shewn themselves to the eyes of a Babylonian at so remote a period. Here is the passage: "What I say to thee, Támithri,[2] I say also to thy neighbours, the Ionians (*Yúnánís*), whom, except for the great aversion that I have to abuse, I should not hesitate to call mere brutes, although excellent men have appeared among them; they outbid one another in vaunting up themselves as to be preferred to the natives of Babylon."[3] "Twenty years ago," says

[1] Page 92. Besides, p. 173, Dr. Chwolson speaks of 2,500 years.

[2] The treatise of Másí, from which this passage is extracted, was, according to Dr. Chwolson, addressed to Támithri, the Canaanite, and turns upon the literary precedence of the Canaanites and Chaldæans. I cannot pass by the improbability which a belief in the high antiquity of such writings calls forth.

[3] Page 91, note. ومثل قولي لكَ يا طاميري اقول لجميرانكَ اليونانيين الذين لولا كراهتي ان اسبّ احداً لقلتُ انّهم

Dr. Chwolson, "when negative criticism was still at its height, it would no doubt have been concluded from this passage that Másí lived after Alexander; but now no one would do so." I confess that I am strongly tempted to draw the conclusion which Prof. Chwolson rejects so disdainfully. How is it possible to place at an ante-historical date a passage which betrays so plainly that national rivalry, which was the characteristic trait of the epoch of the Seleucides, and which assuredly did not exist before the Median war; that is, earlier than the fifth century before Christ?

The passages where the Yúnánís are expressly mentioned are not the only ones which prove that Kúthámí had felt the influence of the Greeks. There are other passages more embarrassing still to scholars who attribute to "The Nabathæan Agriculture" a remote antiquity. In the chapter

كالبهائم وان كان قد خرج فيهم افاضل فاتهم يفخرون على
اهل اقليم بابل الواحد بعد الواحد منهم *

which treats of the cultivation of beans, these words occur: "This is why Armísá (ارميسا) (*Hermes*) and Aghathádímún (اغاثاذيمون) (*Agathodæmon*[1]) have forbidden persons of their country the use of fish and beans, and have strongly insisted on this prohibition."[2] Here Dr. Chwolson admits the difficulty, and tries various solutions of it; but all equally unsatisfactory. He who rebutted so energetically elsewhere, in the case of the composition of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," all idea of successive compilation, has recourse this time to the hypothesis of an interpolation. Then, falling back on this concession, he volunteers a high antiquity to the philosophical and religious part of Hermes and Agathodæmon, though it is obvious that these are Neo-Platonic fictions, adopted, among others, by the Sabians or Modern Babylonians.[3] Finally,

[1] For the part assigned to Agathodæmon in Arabian traditions, which are but an echo of Sabian fables, see Ibn-Abi-Occibia, in the "Journal Asiatique," August-September, 1854, p. 186, in Dr. Sanguinetti's translation.

[2] Pp. 93, 94.

[3] Ibn-Abi-Occibia says that the Nabathæans looked upon Hermes

he attempts to deny the identity of Armísá and Hermes. Armísá was a sage of Babylon; and, indeed, Armísá is represented in many Sabian traditions as a Chaldæan philosopher. But nothing can be deduced from that circumstance. The Hermesian books were accepted by all the East, and at Babylon as if their second country; it was from them that the Arabs derived all their traditions respecting Hermes; and this explains the singular transfer by means of

Trismegister as their countrymen ("Journal Asiatique," March-April, 1854, p. 263). Now the works attributed by Ibn-Abi-Occibia to this Hermes are astrological. Besides, Ibn-Abi-Occibia connects Hermes Trismegister with the Babylonians and the Harranians (*ibid.* August-Sept. 1854, pp. 185, 187, 189, 191, 192). I find in the *Kitab thabacat al-úmen* of Said (p. 20, 21 of M. Schefer's manuscript) the following passage, where Hermes is represented as a modern Babylonian sage, contemporary with Socrates, and devoting his life to revising and correcting the writings of his predecessors:

واجلّهم هو هرمس البابلي وكان في عهد سقراط الفيلسوف اليوناني وذكر ابو جعفر بن محمد بن عمر البلخي في كتاب الالوف انه هو الذي صحح كثيرا من كتب الاوايل في علم النجوم وغيره من اصناف الفلاسفة *

This is in accordance with various legends in which Hermes is connected with Babylon. Hermes appears again in the chapter on Egypt.

which a crowd of the traits of Greek mythology are applied to Babylon by Arabian writers. If the name of Hermes appears here under a different form from that in which it is found in other Arabian authors (هرميس), it should be remembered that nearly all the proper names in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" have the emphasised termination *a*. Ibn-Abi-Occibia, wishing to describe the pronunciation of this word, writes it thus, ارميس.[1]

I have no doubt that many of the extraordinary names, which "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" presents to us, might be traced, in the same manner, to Greek forms, if we had their true reading. Támithri (طامثري) who figures also in Ibn-el-Awwam's writings, is, in the opinion of both Banqueri and Wenrich, identical with Demetrius.[2] I believe, also, that Askolábita or Asbúlúbita, to whom is assigned the part of

[1] "Journal Asiatique," August-Sept. 1854, p. 95.

[2] Wenrich, *De Auct. Græc. vers.* p. 93. Banqueri, *Libro de Agricultura*, t. 1, p. 61 of the introduction, 9, etc.

founder of a religion and benefactor of mankind, is Ἀσκληπιός (Æsculapius),[1] or rather Ἀσκληπιάδης. The part which is assigned to Asclepius in the apocryphal Hermesian legends is well known. Ibn-Abi-Oceibia[2] takes a singular mythology of Æsculapius from a Syriac work; in another place[3] he connects him expressly with Babylon. It is strange that Dr. Chwolson attaches any importance to such chimeras. He even supposes that his Askolábita[4] must be considered as the prototype of the Asklepios of the Greeks. In the same ephemeral spirit he asks in another place[5] whether Asklepios and Hermes were not, in reality, ancient sages deified after their death.[6]

[1] The termination لس causes very diverse readings. I think that here is to be seen a *schin*, remains of the final *os*. M. Quatremère reads it *Kalousha*.

[2] "Journal Asiatique," August-Sept. 1854, p. 181.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 185. [4] Page 19. [5] Page 96.

[6] Ibn Wahshîya is often quoted as having translated the Book on Agriculture of Democrates or Democrites, surnamed الرومي (Herbelot, *Bibl. Orientale*, at the word *Democratis*; Wenrich, *De Auct. Græc. vers.* p. 92, 93; Larsow, *De Dialect Syr. reliquiis*, p. 12, note). But the conclusions which are attempted to be drawn from this fall to the ground, since the ascribing to Ibn Wahshîya

Kúthámí, however, does not only make allusions to Greece. I find also in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" evident traces of Persian influence. The author speaks of a people of Pehlevis (الفهلوية); he describes the Pehlevian language as a Persian dialect.[1] Dr. Chwolson gets out of this difficulty by remarking that nothing positive is known as to the Pehlevian. But, most assuredly, sufficient is known to prove that this language did not exist fourteen centuries before Christ. Prof. Chwolson settles the matter by affecting to believe that the passage cited is an interpolation. I have already shown how unsatisfactory is this style of defence, especially when it is repeated and applied to every similar characteristic passage. The progress which criticism has effected during the last half century consists precisely in discarding, in the majority of cases, those very convenient

of the translation of that work, rests on an error of Herbelot, who seems to have confounded the work of Kúthámí with that of Ibn-el-Awwam. (See the article *Tahashiah.*)

[1] Page 40.

solutions, which would explain every puzzling passage in ancient writings by characterising them as interpolations: it is more willing to admit of the hypothesis of successive retouching and remodelling carried on from age to age. It is certain that the remains of early antiquity have been altered much oftener in this way than by the frauds of copyists—copyists in all ages have proceeded more mechanically.

But why dwell further on this passage, when Dr. Chwolson admits that the author of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" speaks in many places of the Persians, their religion, their philosophy, and their science; and always with an expression of the greatest respect.[1] How is it possible to doubt that he was acquainted with the doctrines of the Zend Avesta, when he speaks of the plant which the "Magi term *Hom*"[2] (هوم), calling this plant thus by the most modern form of its name. Dr. Chwolson

[1] Page 41.

[2] See Anquetil-Duperron, *Livres Sacres de Zoroaster*, Index, at the word *Hom*, 2.

explains away the objection which arises out of these passages in the same way as he does those which result from the mention of Ephesus and Hermes. "The Iranians," he says, "and their institutions, existed full thirteen centuries before Christ; the Babylonians were, therefore, probably acquainted with them." In the first place, it is very doubtful whether the Zend institutions did exist at so remote a period; but, waiving that obscure point, I boldly assert that these institutions, confined for centuries to Bactria, could not have exercised any influence in Babylonia before Cyrus. Then let us add, that the Persian priests are called Magi in "The Nabathæan Agriculture;" and that it is certain that there is no trace of such a word in the Zend Avesta, the priests there being termed *athravó*, and that the name of Magi does not appear to have been given to the Zoroastrian priests till after the establishment of the Persians at Babylon.[1] I do not insist much on this last point;

[1] I reserve the discussion of this point for a future essay.

for Dr. Chwolson might reply that the term مجوس (*magi*) may have replaced a more ancient title, in this version of Ibn Wahshíye. Nevertheless it must be confessed that, in general, Magi-ism, or the Magian faith, as it is found in Kúthámí, bears a much stronger resemblance to apocryphal Parsee-ism, altered by the Hostanes and the Astrampsyches, than the old Zoroasterism of the Zend writings. Besides, there is a word, given as the title of an agricultural work composed by one of the most ancient sages of Babylon, of which it seems to me that its Pehlevian origin cannot be mistaken; it is the word شياشق. It is well known that all Persian words ending in *h* are terminated in Pehlevian by *k*.[1] It is also certain that the word سياسة, "rules, directions," is not Arabic.[2] It appears, then, very probable

[1] See "Hist. gen. des Langues Semitic," l. iii., chap. 4, sec. 1.

[2] Sacy Chrest. Arab. t. ii. p. 160 ff., 184 ff. It is very remarkable that the word *yasa*, from which the Arabic philologists derive it, and which they consider Tartar, an error, I believe, as the word سياسة is found in Arabian authors much anterior to the Tartar influence, had also the form *yasak*.

that شياشق is only the Pehlevian form of سياسه. The word سياسة has been used as a title to a host of moral treatises, or works on ordinary and common subjects.

The Greeks and Persians are not the only foreign nations mentioned by Kúthámí. He speaks also of the Indians and the Egyptians.[1] I do not lay so much stress on his allusion to the Egyptians, who may have had organized sciences at the remote period[2] to which Dr. Chwolson refers. But it may be safely asserted that this was not the case with the Indians. The Brahman race were, at that time, scarcely established in the valley of the Ganges. In many widely differing ways we arrive at the conclusion that positive science is of modern introduction into Brahman India, and that it has been introduced from abroad.

The Jews are only once named in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," and I

[1] Page 90.

[2] For the same reason, I do not advert to the mention of China, p. 81.

freely admit, with Dr. Chwolson, that the passage where they are mentioned is an interpolation of Ibn Wahshíya.[1] But, if their name does not appear in the work of Kúthámí, it is impossible not to perceive their influence. Can it be doubted after having read the passage which is here given:[2] فان قال قائل ان الكسدانيين بدؤا بالتعريض بالجرامقة فانه لا يصدق في هذا لان الجرامقة ليس من نسل ادم والكسدانيين من نسله ولغة الجرامقة واسمآؤهم لِما سمّوا ينبغي ان يكون قبل ادم الذي سمّا لكلّ شيّ اسمآء استأنفه ووضعه فالجرامقة اذِ لم يضادّوا الكسدانيين انما ضادّوا ادم لان ادم سمّي هذا الشجرة باقرماعي والناس مجمعون علي انّ ما رسمه ادم هو الحق والصواب وما رسمه غيره باطل فالجرامقة من وُلد الشابرقان الاول وليس هو نظير ادم ولا عديله ولا مقاربه ايضاً *

Previous to these words, the text treats of a puerile contest as to the name of a certain plant, as to which the Assyrians of the North and the Chaldæans or Babylonians were not agreed; the author, always full of

[1] Page 43, note. [2] Page 44, note.

his ideas of disputed precedence, then proceeds to say:

"There are persons who believe that the Chaldæans began the attack on the Assyrians; but it is not so. The Assyrians, in fact, are not of the race of Adam, while the Chaldæans are his descendants. Thus, the language of the Assyrians, and the names by which they call different objects, cannot be older than Adam, who first gave to everything its name, and was the first who established and organized language itself. Therefore it is not the Chaldæans whom the Assyrians oppose, but Adam; for Adam named this plant *akermaï*. Now, it is universally acknowledged that what Adam ordained is true and wise; and what others have ordained is without foundation. Then, too, the Assyrians are the children of Shabrikan the First, who is neither comparable nor equal to Adam, and who cannot even come near to him."

Now, is it possible not to see the allusion made here to what is related in Genesis,

chap. ii. v. 19: "God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them, and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." Now Dr. Chwolson, who has not failed to perceive this coincidence,[1] does not accept the conclusion, but contents himself with saying that he shall afterwards explain what is here said of Adam, by quoting another more elaborate (*ausführlichere*) passage on the subject. Certainly such a passage ought to have been given. I am no less surprised to see that Prof. Chwolson quotes, without the slightest hesitation, without perceiving that it furnishes a serious objection to his own theory, another passage:[2] وهما من نسل اخوين من وُلْد ادم وكانا من امّ واحدة من ازواج ادم ونسآيه لانّ ادم علي ما ذكر العلمآء بالنسب وُلد اربعة وستّين وُلْد اثنين وعشرين انثي واثنين واربعين ذكر فاعقب من الذكور منهم اربعة عشر وُلدا والباقين لا عقب لهم باق الي الآن *

[1] Pp. 44, 45, note.

[2] Pp. 49, 50.

"These two nations (the Canaanites and the Chaldæans) are descended from two brothers, both sons of Adam, and of the same mother, one of the wives of Adam; for Adam, according to those skilled in genealogy, had sixty-four children, of whom twenty-two were daughters and forty-two sons. These forty-two sons left eighty heirs. The others had no posterity which has descended to our times." In a third passage[1] the question is again as to the nations which were the posterity of the children of Adam and as to those which were not descended from them.[2]

This direct form is not the only one under which the Biblical or apocryphal traditions of the Hebrews seem to have found their

[1] Page 61. See Ewald, Jahrbücher der Biblischen Wiss. 1857, p. 153. The name of Adam appears to have been known among the Babylonians and the Phœnicians (See Mem. de l'Acad. t. xxiii. 2nd part, pp. 267, 268; Hippolyti (ut aiunt) Refutationes Hæresium, Duncker et Schneidewin), p. 136; but the particulars cited here are evidently Biblical.

[2] In the book of Tenkelúshá which Dr. Chwolson believes much more modern than the Agriculture, but which, in my opinion, is of the same school, Cain, son of Adam, is also made to figure (pp. 142, 143). In the same book, there is mention of the Cherubins (*ibid*).

way into Babylon. The same influence is met with in a more indirect, but not less unmistakeable form, in other passages of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture." I have not the least doubt, in fact, that most of the personages, adduced as ancient sages of Babylon, and whose names are strikingly like those of the Hebrew patriarchs, are those very patriarchs themselves. Dr. Chwolson denies it; but his efforts appear to me quite inadequate to disprove this identity, which has so forcibly struck both M. Quatremère[1] and Prof. Ewald.[2] Let me endeavour to prove that Adam, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, are to be found in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," with legends analogous to those which they have in the apocryphal writings of Jews and Christians, and subsequently in those of the Mussulmans.

One of the ancient sages who fills the

[1] "Mémoire sur les Nabatéens," p. 109 ff. "Journal des Savants," Mars, 1857, p. 147.

[2] Jahrbücher der Biblischen Wissenchaften, 1857, pp. 153, 290, 291.

most important part in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" is Adami. Adami was considered as the founder of agriculture in Chaldæa;[1] to him are attributed certain books of which Kúthámí doubts the authenticity, and which he found altered or interpolated. Kúthámí, a zealous monotheist, quotes him among his authorities. We know that many apocryphal writings were attributed to Adam,[2] that the Mendaïtes ascribed their chief book to him, and that the ancient Sabians had books under his name. Our Adami is thus most undoubtedly the Adamas or apocryphal Adam of the Babylonian sects.[3] Can there remain any doubt about this identity, when it is seen that Adam bears, in "The Agriculture," the title of ابو البشر *Father of Mankind*,[4] a title which all the Moslem East gives to Adam.[5]

[1] P. 27.

[2] See Herbelot Bibliothèque Orientale, art. *Adam*; Fabricii Codex Pseudopigraphus Vet. Test. t. i. p, 1 ff.; t. ii. p. 1 ff.

[3] See Hippolyti Refutationes Hæresium, ind. p. 557.

[4] Page 174.

[5] Dr. Chwolson himself seems to confound, at times, what relates

Ishítha,[1] the son of Adami, described as a religious legislator, as the founder of astrology and of astrolatria, is undeniably Seth. We know that among all the apocryphal legends of the antediluvian patriarchs, that of Seth is the most ancient, and appears already in Josephus.[2] Ishítha, according to "The Agriculture," had followers called Ishíthians; an organised sect are descended from him, having a sort of high-priest; and numerous writings were circulated under his name. These Ishíthians are very probably the sect of the Sethians, which played an important part in the first centuries of our era.[3] All the fables which the Mussulmans connect with Seth, in looking upon him as the prophet of an age of mankind which they call the age of Seth, come doubtless from the same source. Ibn-Abi-

to Adami and Adam (pp. 44, 45, note; 49, 50, note; 190). See Banqueri, i. p. 9.

[1] Page 27. [2] Antiquitates, I. ii. 3.

[3] The theology of the Sethians appears to have been of true Babylonian doctrine, which they sought to blend with Biblical teaching. (See Hippolyti Refutationes Hæresium, edit. Duncker et Schneidewin, p. 198 ff.)

Occibia ascribes expressly to the Sabians the notion that Seth taught the art of medicine, and that he had received it as an heritage from Adam.[1]

Akhnúkha (اخنوخا) or Hánúkhá (خنوخا)[2] is Enoch.[3] Ibn-Abi-Occibia, drawing from Sabian sources, calls Enoch (اخنوخ).[4] We know the part of "inventor" which this patriarch filled of old. The Arabs, also following these Sabian traditions, identify him with Hermes.[5] No doubt the Babylonian Akhnúkha, often quoted in the same line with Armísá, is the legendary Enoch, who rises into such high favour towards the commencement of our era.

Anúhá, the Canaanite (انوحا),[6] another of

[1] See Herbelot Bibl. Orient. art. *Sheith*. We find traces of the Sethians even lower; see Chwolson's Ssabier, II. p. 269.

[2] Page 99, note.

[3] Banqueri has noticed, I. p. 9, that Adam, Enoch, etc., are mentioned in every page of Ibn-el-Awwam.

[4] "Journal Asiatique," August-Sept., 1854, pp. 185, 187.

[5] Ibn-Abi-Occibia, "Journal Asiatique," August-Sept., 1854, pp. 185, 189.

[6] Akhnúkha must not be confounded with Anúhá. The orthography of the two words is different, and in one passage, the two names are quoted as distinct, following one another (p. 62, 95, note).

the founders, represented as the apostle of monotheism, is undoubtedly Noah. Indeed, a great deluge happened in his time. Moreover, Anúhá planted the vine, and he is always cited as an authority in speaking of the making of wine.[1]

Finally, Ibrahim, the Canaanite (that is to say of Palestine), is certainly, in spite of what Dr. Chwolson[2] says about it, the patriarch Abraham. He is represented in "The Agriculture" as an apostle of monotheism, and as having denied the divinity of the sun. Who can fail to recognise in this the rabbinical fable, where Abraham, filling the part of confessor of the faith, holds victorious controversies against Nimrod and the idolatrous Chaldæans? Besides,[3] Ibrahim, the Canaanite, is an Imám who undertakes long journies to avoid the famine which occurred in the days of the

[1] Page 62, note. See Ewald, Jahrbücher, 1857, p. 291. Sáma, another Babylonian sage, classed with Hanúkhá, Adámi, etc., in the book of Tenkelúshá, appears to me identical with Shem.

[2] Page 43.

[3] See especially Koran, xxxvii. 83 ff; lx. 4 ff.

Canaanite king Salbámá.[1] Then,[2] too, he is brought into connection with Númrúda, and represented as an emigrant from the land of Canaan. Generally speaking, the stories founded on his life correspond perfectly with his legend, as received among the Jews a little before our era. Josephus[3] of old, somewhat in an arbitrary manner, identifies Abraham with an ancient Babylonian sage mentioned by Berosus; the reputation of Abraham as a Chaldæan sage was established at that period no less than in that of Philo.[4]

As to the part which Númrúda plays in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," as a Canaanite priest,[5] and as founder of the Canaanite dynasty at Babylon, it would be presumptuous to say that this idea only has its origin in a plagiarism from the Bible. It is very possible that there might be some

[1] Page 45 ff. [2] Page 49. [3] Antiquities, I. vii. 2.

[4] Philonis Judæi Opera, edit. Mangey, ii. 13. See Ewald, Geschichte des Volkes Israel, i. 436, 437 (2nd edition); Winer, Biblisthes Realwœrterbuch, i. p. 12 (3rd edition).

[5] Page 49.

national tradition respecting him. Nimrod, as we shall presently see, was a popular personage in Chaldæa in the first centuries of our era. It is difficult to unravel, amidst the confusion of ideas which then prevailed in the East, the origin of legends so denuded of true character, and over which is thrown that general level of mere platitude which gives such a singular air of monotony and conventionalism to all the traditions transmitted to us by Arabian writers.

Certainly, if either of these facts were an isolated one, one might hesitate to draw from it any deduction. But they form altogether a mass of evidence which appears to me most solid. One subtle reply may be true, but ten subtle replies cannot be so. I must therefore consider it as an established fact, that each one of the personages I have enumerated, all of whom are given in "The Agriculture" as ancient Babylonian sages, is the representative of one of those classes of apocryphal writings of Ba-

bylonian or Syrian origin, which bear the name of a patriarch, and round which are grouped a greater or less number of followers. "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" is of a period when these writings possessed full authority, and this explains why the Jews, who furnished the originals of all these fictions, are not mentioned in the work of Kúthámí. The apocryphal traditions of which I am speaking were, in fact, in such general circulation, that they passed at Babylon for Babylonian, in the same manner as the Arabs, who, when relating their fables of Edris and Lokman, never acknowledge that they owe them to the Jews, but always seem to forget or ignore the fact.[1]

If we look at the general character of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," in-

[1] It is Dr. Chwolson himself ("Die Ssabier," t. i., l. i., c. 13) who has most clearly shown how the Jewish patriarchs were adopted by the Sabians, the Harranians, and other sects of the East. Dr. Chwolson describes, elsewhere (pp. 186, 187 of his new memoir), a very curious passage of a Jewish apocryphal tale, fathered on Noah, which has the most complete affinity to those of the Nabathæan text.

dependently of the peculiarities which have still to be adduced, as much, at least, as it is possible to do, from the extracts of M. Quatremère and Dr. Chwolson,[1] we shall find in it all the evidences of lower antiquity:—no grandeur of expression; a flimsy method of reasoning, bordering on puerility, in a word, strikingly analogous to that of Arabian authors; and, above all, that flat and prolix style of those periods of much writing consequent upon an influx of paper or other writing materials; whilst throughout the whole work the style is essentially personal and reflective, so contrary to that of works of high antiquity. There the author keeps ever in the background, to render more prominent the doc-

[1] The Paris Manuscript, which had been sent to the Russian minister for Dr. Chwolson's use, was only returned to the Bibliothèque Impériale when the present memoir was nearly finished. I have not thought it necessary to devote further time to the perusal of this manuscript, already examined by M. Quatremère, and which only could furnish me an imperfect text of one third of the work, of which Dr. Chwolson possesses a complete and collated copy. We must wait for the promised edition of Prof. Chwolson in order to make a consecutive and comparative examination of the work.

trines which he enunciates, and the facts which he relates; here, on the contrary, throughout the whole composition we find pitiful squabbles, polemics, a class of writings belonging to those forms of literature which mark the decay of human intellect. A great number of controversial books are mentioned in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture:" Másí, the Suranian, at least two thousand years before Christ, according to Dr. Chwolson, addresses an epistle in verse to his son Kenked:[1] Támithri, the Canaanite, writes a book against Anúhá, the Canaanite: Dewánáï, three thousand years before Christ, wrote against the Syrian Mardáïád, who gave Syria the preference over Babylonia; and threatened him with a speedy death if he did not retract this impious heresy:[2] Másí and Támithri are in scientific correspondence with one another; and in another place are made to write against each other.[3] Kúthámí,

[1] Pp. 60, 90.

[2] Page 91, note. The Syrian name Mardáïád (. . . مكرمد) appears less ancient.

[3] Pp. 60, 90.

in the name of the Chaldæans, disputes their literary priority with the Canaanites on the most futile subjects; thorough and engrossing national vanity throws an insipid air over the whole work. I am willing to admit that this disease is a very old one in the world; but it betrays itself, with artlessness, in truly ancient works; while here it is absurdly paraded, as in Sanchoniathon and other writings of this intermediate age, when the East was brought into contact with Greece. "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" thus appears to me to be imbued with all the blemishes which afflicted the human intellect towards the third and fourth centuries: charlatanism, astrology, sorcery, and a taste for the apocryphal. It is very far removed from Greek science of the period of Alexander, so free from all superstition, so fixed in method, so infinitely beyond all those idle chimeras which afterwards led astray and retarded the scientific progress of the mind for nearly sixteen centuries.

I leave the examination of the scientific theories of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" to those who are familiar with the history of the natural sciences. Such an examination will not be possible till the work of Kúthámí is published in its entirety. I shall only make one observation on this head: the classification of plants into cold and warm occurs incessantly in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture."[1] It is known that this classification is later than Theophrastus, who, in that general theory, lays bare one basis of Greek Botany.[2] I shall only point out to astronomical scholars two passages[3] where there are allusions to the division of the zodiac into twelve signs, and to the seven planets. The philosophy of Kúthámí, indeed, is not of a character to bespeak great antiquity for the work in which it is found. This philosophy is a kind of monotheism, which induces the author to repudiate the established creeds of

[1] Page 88.
[2] Theophrasti Historia Plantarum, I. ii.
[3] Pp. 51, 53, note.

his time, and vigorously to attack idolatry. I am perfectly aware that professions of a more theistic tendency were common among the Shemetic nations; but it would certainly not be at Babylon where Shemetism, so to say, was of so mingled a character, that one would most expect to find it. But whenever these professions of faith occur in remote antiquity, it is never in the polemical, reflective, and systematic forms which they assume in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture." Prof. Ewald is right in believing that such passages bespeak the full development of a monotheistical religion.[1] The kind of incredulity towards the received religion which peeps out in Kúthámí and several of his countrymen, and the atheism of which some traces are perceptible in his writings, point to the works of Berosus and Sanchoniathon, and belong to the epoch of the Seleucides. It is well known that the religious creeds in Babylon were much shaken at that period, and that many persons

[1] Page 100.

affected a sort of materialism and impiety, in the belief that by so doing they were following Grecian style and manner.[1]

[1] I think that the Arabian legend of Empedocles, and the materialist writings which are ascribed to him are of Babylonian origin, and belong to this movement.

CHAPTER III.

THE author of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" was acquainted with Greek science; an echo of the Bible, or at the very least, of Jewish belief, is found in his writings; he allows full authority to the apocryphal writings ascribed to Hebrew patriarchs; he believes in those half-trickish writings which pretended to represent the science of the Indians, Egyptians, and Persians, in the first centuries of our era; and he admits Hermes and Agathedæmon amongst Babylonian sages. The date of the "Nabathæan Agriculture," at least *a parte ante* is from these facts sufficiently determined. It remains now to be seen whether we do not possess other works, the bringing of which into juxtaposition may

assist us in fixing yet more precisely the character of the singular work which engages our attention.

It is Dr. Chwolson himself who shall furnish the means of our doing so. One of Dr. Chwolson's merits indeed is to have drawn attention to the fact that "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" is not the only work of its kind,[1] and that we possess three other works of the same nature, all translated by Ibn Wahshíya. The first of these books, the كتاب السموم or "Book of Poisons;" is composed of three works, which according to Dr. Chwolson, have been blended together by Ibn Wahshíya. The authors of the three works are Súhab-Sáth, Yarbúká, and Rewáthá; Súhab-Sáth is more ancient than Yarbúká, and Yarbúká is quoted in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture." All the peculiarities, therefore, which denote Yarbúká to be an author of

[1] M. Weyers had previously given this bibliographical information most fully. ("Specimen criticum exhibens locos Ibn Khacanis," Lugd. Bat., 1831, pp. 100, 101, note.

very moderate antiquity, must also destroy the pretensions which are raised with regard to the name of Kúthámí. Now numberless traits prove that Yarbúká is a Chaldæan of comparatively modern times. He speaks of the city of Kazvin, which appears to have been founded in the time of the Sassinides;[1]

[1] M. Barbier de Meynard has kindly communicated to me the following information on this subject: "The accounts furnished by Mahometan chroniclers as to the origin of Kazvin, will not allow our assigning a date to this city anterior to the Christian era. The national vanity of the Persians, we know, neglects no occasion of placing the founding of their old capital cities in the obscurity of primitive ages. Their historians have adopted a naive form on this point, which constitutes at once the disorder and the vitality of their memorials. They attribute the foundation of such towns as Balkh, Rhages, Susa, etc., to the mythical kings Taomurs and Houchgen of the fabulous dynasty of the Pichdadiens. The silence which they preserve as to Kazvin has, therefore, a significance which criticism cannot ignore. A very popular cosmographer in the East, Hamd-Allah, of Kazvin, has compiled a sketch of his native city, for which he has consulted local legends no less than the writings of his predecessors. Among the records that he brings forward, one only quotes Shahpúr, son of Ardéchir (Sapor I.), as the founder of a little town named Shadpúr, which was the cradle of Kazvin. Hamza of Ispahan names Behram I., without resting his assertion on any proof. On the contrary, Shahpúr Zúl-Aktaf (Sapor II.) is almost universally considered as the founder of this city. That prince, wishing to subdue his warlike neighbours, before attacking the Roman empire, constructed a fortified town, about A.D. 330, a sort of outpost destined to hold the hordes of Deïlem in awe. The ruins, of which (*Hamd-Allah*) Kazvini has not ventured to fix the date, have

he quotes a certain Bábekái as an ancient Babylonian sage. The science of "The Book of Poisons" is imbued with charlatanism; sorcery abounds in its pages;—we feel that these are the fruits of an art in its decay, which, no longer sustained by the traditions of true science, degenerates into superstition. Verbiage, trivial personalities, so unlike the style of ancient writers, are here even more rife than in the work of Kúthámí.

We have, then, a work, anterior to "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," which throughout presents evident marks of modern origin. But another Nabathæan work, also translated by Ibn Wahshíya, gives rise to yet more important deductions. This work is entitled كتاب تنكلوشا البابلي القوثاني "The Book of Tenkelúshá, the Babylonian, the Kukanian." It is a genethlialogical

doubtless no other origin. In a word, from such scanty evidence of the Oriental traditions, as well as the absolute silence of the Greek historians, one is justified in coming to the conclusion that the opinion which would assign a remote antiquity to Kazvín only rests on doubtful documents or on merely gratuitous conjectures.

work, one of those books which, on going out into the world towards the close of the age of the Seleucides, made the word Chaldæan synonymous with charlatan. Here there can be no doubt. Dr. Chwolson gives up all idea of putting "The Book of Tenkelúsha in the same rank with those of Yarbúka and Kúthámí. He places it in the period of the Arsacides, at the latest towards the first century after Christ.[1] Greek influence betrays itself here indeed in an unmistakeable manner; a certain ارسطابولوس is cited in this work, a name in which one may trace *Aristobulus*, and which in any case, is certainly that of a Greek.

I shall prove, presently, that the work of Tenkelúshá is not alone known to us through the translation of Ibn Wahshíya, and that the Greeks have often quoted it. Let it suffice for the present, that Dr. Chwolson recognizes that Tenkelúshá is a Chaldæan of the lower period. How is it that Prof. Chwolson has not perceived

[1] P. 136 ff.

the important deductions which follow this admission? The work of Tenkelúshá, by Dr. Chwolson's own confession, must be posterior by fifteen centuries to the "Agriculture," and "The Book of Poisons." There should, therefore, be a marked difference between the book of Kúthámí (? Tenkelúshá) and these two works; but there is scarcely any. The work of Tenkelúshá is exactly of the same physiognomy as those of Kúthámí and Yarbúká. There is similar science; a similar state of religion; the same celebrities; the same authorities;[1] similar apocryphal traditions; and, in one word, it is of the same school. Tenkelúshá, like the ancient sages of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," is surrounded by fabulous legends, mingled with the old mythology of the country.[2] The state of prosperity and political independence, that flourishing cultivation,[3] that rich and varied literature, that art so fully developed, which induces M. Quatremère to fix the

[1] Pp. 99, 136, 156 ff. [2] P. 132. [3] Pp. 150, 150 ff.

publication of "The Nabathæan Agriculture" in the times of Nebuchadnezzar, is met again feature for feature in the Arsacidan or Sassinidan book of Tenkelúshá. Can it be admitted that in fifteen, or even in eight centuries (to confine ourselves to the calculation adopted by our deceased brother, M. Quatremère, nothing should have been altered in Babylon, and that two works composed at such a long interval should evince so striking a resemblance? A deduction of the same kind, and decisive, may be drawn from the very title of the work. The author, after the epithet البابلي, puts that of القوقاني. Dr. Chwolson considers that this epithet designates a School;[1] and I will not argue the point with him. But Kúthámí too assumes the title of القوقاني. Yarbúká, much more ancient, according to Prof. Chwolson, also bears the same epithet of القوقاني. Can any one conceive it probable that the same school should have continued for two thousand years, and that, by some

[1] P. 31 ff.

extraordinary accident, the only three Babylonian writers, whose works have come down to us, should, at such immense intervals, have been attached to the same institution?

The fourth Nabathæan work, entitled كتاب اسرار الشمس والقمر which sets forth the opinions of the pretended Babylonian sages, Adámi, Ankebúthá, and Askolábíta, on the artificial production of living beings, appears anterior, at least in point of ideas, to "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," since Kúthámí constantly appeals to the principles which are there developed.[1] Now it is very difficult to allow that this novel composition belongs to high antiquity. The science which it contains, is that which we find in Berosus and Sanchoniathon; a sort of atheism, professing to explain the formation of beings after a materialist fashion, and without the intervention of the Godhead. This idea appears to have been one of the fundamental principles of Babylonian science.

[1] P. 165 ff.

Can one see in it anything but a plagiarism from the atomist theories of the Greeks? Or, must it be admitted that the materialist cosmogonies of the East and of Greece had their rise in Babylon? Surely here, we are permitted to hesitate. But I do not think, that any enlightened reader would entertain any doubts as to the age and character of the scholars referred to, after perusing pages 265 to 268 of Dr. Chwolson's memoir. In seeing them boldly give rules for the formation at will of plants and animals, affirm manifest impossibilities; in following the relation of one of them, Ankebúthá, of the manner by which he had succeeded in forming a man, and kept him alive for a year; in reading the story of another who maintains that he, too, had succeeded in the same experiment, but that the king, for political reasons, had forbidden him to repeat it;—one is tempted, I imagine, to class them, not among the ancient founders of real science, but among those more modern charlatans, who under

cover of the formularies of a worn out science, inundate the world with idle fancies, and contribute, in a deplorable manner, to the abasement and perversion of the human intellect.[1]

One deduction appears to me to arise from the analysis to which we have subjected "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," and the other Nabathæan writings, and that is that the School to which they belong, taken altogether, cannot be anterior to the third or fourth century of our era; and that the literary movement which they suggest as earlier, does not allow us to place it before Alexander. I am far from insisting that the work of Kúthámí could not have preserved to us many most ancient fragments, remodelled in the course of time in all sorts of way. It may be that the art which it teaches in its procedure can be traced back to the most ancient epochs of

[1] In the Sanscrit Pantchatantra is allusion to similar pseudo-science. See Benfey's Pantschatantra, fuenf Buecher Indischer Fabeln, vol. II. p. 332 ff. *Translator's Note.*

Assyria,[1] in the same way that the *Cyrimensores Latini*, recently published for the first time, have preserved to us usages and rites, which can only be explained by reference to the *Brahmanas* of India; and which belong, therefore, to the most ancient periods of the Arian race. The question now under discussion is a question of literary history; such questions, it is well known, are quite apart from historical criticism. In confining the problem, within these limits, I venture to believe that the proofs adduced above are conclusive. Peculiarities which mark a modern age, are found in the very heart of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture;" the theories of the book, taken altogether, are those of the Hellenic period; the authors cited by Kúthámí, themselves quote the Greeks; the point to which the book carries us, is that of the Sabiasm of the first centuries of our era. Before drawing this statement to a close, however, I ought, 1st, to endeavour to account for some

[1] See Berosi Fragmenta, l. init.

of the singularities which have led Dr. Chwolson to adopt his theory; and, 2nd, to explain how the composition of such writings was possible in Babylon, at the period which I have assigned to them.

Two strange peculiarities give an undoubted appearance of solidity to Dr. Chwolson's hypothesis: the first is the term Canaanite, applied to the reigning dynasty of Babylon at the period of the composition of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture;" and the second, that there are names of Babylonian kings mentioned in the "Agriculture" which are not found in any known dynasty. The assertion of Kúthámí as to what concerns the Canaanite dynasty, is not so isolated as it appears at first sight. Many Arabian historians and geographers, some of whom are anterior to the Arabic translation of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," speak of Canaanite kings reigning at Babylon, and Nemrod is expressly mentioned as the founder of this dynasty, which they connect by the most

contradictory and absurd genealogies to Canaan, son of Ham. *Nemrod*, is, according to them, a title common to all the sovereigns of the Nabathæans, on which account they have made a plural to it النمارذة.[1] An Arabian geography, which M. Quatremère believes to be anonymous, but which M. Reinaud[2] has shown to be the work of Dimeshki, enumerating the nations comprised under the name of Nabathæans, places among them the Chaldæans, Casdæans, Jenbáns, Garmæans, Kútaris, and *Canaanites*.[3] M. Quatremère[4] quotes at the same time a passage from the "Agriculture" where the Canaanites and the inhabitants of Syria are comprehended among the Nabathæans. The total want of judgment and accuracy which characterises Arabian historians, when treating of ancient history, does not however admit of any safe conclusions being drawn from these passages.

[1] Chwolson, pp. 67-68; Quatremère, pp. 57-58, 62.
[2] Introd. à la Géographie d'Aboulféda, p. 150 ff.
[3] Quatremère, pp. 62-63. [4] P. 61.

Besides which, one fact is sure to spoil every hypothesis which might be formed from them; and that is, that the Hebrew patriarchs Anúhá and Ibrahim are called Canaanites, which would seem to make that word synonymous with Israelites. We must wait for the solution of this enquiry till the entire publication of the "Agriculture." Two things, however, appear certain. The first, that the name of Canaanites with the Babylonians did not always refer to the ancient inhabitants of Phœnicia; and the second, that this theory of a Canaanite dynasty of which Nimrod was the founder, is of Biblical origin. "After the deluge," says Masoudi, "mankind established themselves in different countries; such were the Nabathæans, who founded the city of Babylon, and those of the descendants of Ham, who settled in the same province, under the guidance of Nimrod, son of Kanaan, son of Sínkhárib, son of Ham, and grandson of Noah." "The Nabathæans," says Dimeshki, "descended from Nabit, son of

Kanaan, son of Kúsh, son of Ham. They inhabited the province of Babylon, and had for their king Nimrod the great.[1] The same thing is found in the *Kitáb tabacáth al-úmem*, the Sâid of Toledo: "The Chaldæans are a nation illustrious from the antiquity of their empire, and the celebrity of their kings, who were descended from the Nimrods the giants, of whom the first was Nimrod, son of Cúsh, son of Ham."[2] M. Chwolson himself thinks that Masoudi has borrowed what he says of his Nimrodian dynasty, from Christian sources. Who knows, that the name of Canaanites is not in this instance one of those con-

[1] Quatremère, pp. 56, 57, 62.

[2] Here is the entire passage, according to the MS. of M. Schefer, p. 19: وامّا الامّة الثالثة وهم الكلدانيون فكانت امّة قديمة الرياسة نبيهة الملوك كان من النمارذة والجبابرة الذين اوّلهم النمرود بن كوس بن حام باني اعجول (؟) الذي ذكره الله في كتابه العزيز فقال, etc. According to the passage in the Koran, xvi. 28. The plurals جبابرة and نمارذة formed, after the same analogy, from גִּבּוֹר and נִמְרֹד (Gen. x. 8-9), betray in themselves a biblical origin. Some lines below there is, in the Said, the identical genealogies given by Masoudi.

ventional words, by which, in the East, it was often sought to escape from getting embroiled with suspected powers; something in the way in which the Jews successively designated the nations which persecuted them by the name of *Edomites* or *Amalekites*, and the capitals of nations which were hostile to them by that of *Babylon*. The reserve with which Kúthámí speaks of the Canaanites, confirms this hypothesis. The histories of the Jews, Samaritans, Mendaïtes, Harranians, Nosaïris, and Yezidis, offer examples of this kind of falsification. Possibly, too, many of the singular names which surprise us in "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," proceed from some form of the cabbala or secret writing. The use of these forms is very ancient in the East; since we find at least two very probable examples in the text of Jeremiah.[1]

[1] Since the completion of this memoir, I have received some communications from M. Kunik, Member of the Academy at St. Petersburgh, which confirm me in this hypothesis. M. Kunik is tempted to believe that the Mussulmans appear in the "Agriculture" under some pseudonyme. He has taken up some extremely ingenious views as to the part which must there be assigned to

The names of the Babylonian kings furnished by Nabathæan writings cause at first the greatest astonishment. Here are the seventeen names of kings which I have gathered from Dr. Chwolson: Abéd-Fergílá, Bédiná, Salbamá, Harmáti, Hináfa, Kamash, Marináta, Númrúda, Kerúsáni, Kijámá, Riccána, Sahá, Shámajá, Shémúta, Súsikyá, Thibátána, Zahmuna. Only one of these names positively corresponds with those known to us elsewhere, and that is Númrúda, which, as we have seen, carries us back to a fabulous antiquity. Another name, that of Kerúsáni, may possibly, I think, correspond with pre-historical traditions. A hero, common to the literature of the Vedas, and in the Zend-Avesta, and who therefore may be carried back to ancient Arian mythology, is Kerúsaní, who, like Nimrod,

Gnosticism. He thinks (and a similar idea had already occurred to me) that Jesus Christ is concealed under the name of Azada; that Saturn arrayed in black (Chwolson, pp. 115, 135) is the God of the Jews, the Sathaneal of the Anti-Christian gnostics; that the pretended Babylonian anchorites (Chwolson, p. 159) are Christian monks; and that the antipathy of the Gnostics to the Christians betrays itself in many places.

fills the part of an archer and a hunter.[1] It is even very possible, that Kerúsáni, like Zohak (the Persian Ajdáhák), and like Zoroaster himself, may be a personage of the Iranian mythology, adopted by Babylonia. As to the other names, they are too obscure to allow either of objections or proofs to invalidate the authority of Kúthámi. Shámajá and Súsikyá have an Hebrew look; Abed-Fergílá (עבד...אל), Salbámá, Kijámá, and Riccána,[2] appear Shemitic. With the exception of these, it would be difficult to find a series of names which are so obscure to the philologist and the historian.

It is doubtful whether all these singularities will be explained even by an acquaintance with the entire "Book of Nabathæan Agriculture." It is well known that one fatal circumstance throws a grievous uncertainty

[1] Weber, Indische Studien, II. pp. 313-314; Kuhn, Die Herabkunft des Feuers, pp. 131, 138 ff., 146, 147, 171 ff.

[2] Compare the name of the Babylonian sage *Ναβουριανός* (נבוריחן) in Strabo, (XVI. i. 6). But this name of Riccána, according to Prof. Chwolson, must be much more modern than the others, and of the period of the Arsacides.

on particulars with respect to foreign nations which have adopted the Arabic alphabet. I allude to the indecisive form of certain letters; the absence of any diacritic points in proper names, or the inaccurate way in which the points are placed. All Shemitic alphabets are bad channels of transcription, owing to the absence of vowels. How then is this difficulty to be overcome, when to this source of inaccuracy, we have to add another, even more serious, that of the uncertainty as to the letters themselves; the same character, for example, being, perchance, either *b*, *n*, *t*, *y*.[1]

[1] The name of نسوشاذ, for instance, which previously was read: Yanbúshádh, at the time when "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" came to the knowledge of the Jews in the 12th century (v. *ante*, p. 7), and which would give the key to the problem, if it could be clearly ascertained—this Yanbúshádh, in fact, should be a personage whom we know under some other name,—is susceptible of such a variety of renderings, that we may say that the forms or letters of which it consists are of no value. The first three forms may be taken each for four different letters; the ز which follows them is easily confounded with the ر; the three forms of the س may be like the strokes at the beginning, three different letters, each reading in four ways; the ا is often confounded with the ل and the د with the ر.

The perplexity which one experiences in certain chapters of Masoudi or Ibn-Abi-Oceibia, whenever the subject relates to Greece and Assyria, is scarcely less than that which "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" occasions. There are the same difficulties in seeking to establish the list of forty-two Babylonian kings, beginning with Nimrod, and ending with Darius, which is given by the first of these authors, as in finding the key to the history contained in the work of Kúthámí. The geography of "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture," which one would imagine must be more easy to settle, is not a bit less obscure. It is impossible to form equally sound deductions from such faulty records, as from faithful documents. Besides which, nearly the same effect is produced on historical facts by the poverty and scantiness of Arabic prose, as by their alphabet or proper names. Not one of the circumstances which they have handed down to us respecting Greece is

recognisable. Their translations themselves are nothing more than free reproductions, accommodated to their habits of writing, and we are told expressly that all the translations of Ibn Wahshíya were dictated by him to one of his disciples, who subsequently adapted them to the taste of his times.[1]

I would ask permission to hazard, if only under the form of a mere conjecture, a supposition which, however, it is very difficult not to entertain—I mean the possibility of a literary fraud, or some degree of bad faith, on the part of the author. Most undoubtedly the book is of an epoch which always gives rise to suspicions, and not without cause. The instance of the *Desatir* occurs to me, as a case in point, whether we like it or not, to confuse the mind of a critic. The hypothesis of the *Desatir* being apocryphal is surrounded by as many difficulties as that which declares the history fabricated upon which "The Book of Naba-

[1] Pp. 15-16.

thæan Agriculture" is founded, rendering it necessary to find at some point in history, the reality of that series of sects, of prophets, and founders of religion, which the book of the Parsee enumerates. To reconcile other portions, gives rise to equal doubts. Kúthámí, like Berosus or Sanchoniathon, like Josephus, or Mar Abas Catina, or Moses Chorenensis, appears to have been afflicted to the greatest degree with the faults of all Oriental writers from the time of Alexander to about our fifth century, a total want of judgment, unmeasured syncretism, silly deductions *(évhémérisme)*, and exaggerated national vanity.[1] Untruths, apocryphal fabrications, all sorts of confusion;—sticking at nothing, in order to establish their favourite position, proof of the high antiquity of their doctrines, and superiority of those doctrines over those of the Greeks. That position was sometimes true, at least so far as the antiquity of

[1] See, for fuller details, my Mémoire sur Sanchoniathon, in the Mémoires de l'Acad. tome XXIII. 2nd part, p. 317 ff.

the doctrines is concerned; but the arguments brought forward to prove it, were almost always detestable. An imaginary history, formed by artful contrivances, obtained credit, and after some centuries, became an authority. From this air of folly and extravagance, which pervades ancient Babylonian histories in Arabian writers of the school of Bagdad, often led away themselves by the false method of their predecessors, "The Book of Nabathæan Agriculture" appears to have been written at the date of this apocryphal and trickish literature. The author is not a forger himself, but he appears to be misled by forgers. The true descendants of the Nabathæans, the Mendaïtes, continued until the Mussulman epoch, and almost up to our own times, to practise similar frauds, from which small communities free themselves with such difficulty. Many of their mythological personages have thus become Hebrew patriarchs.[1] The Yezidis have

[1] Chwolson, Die Ssabier, I. p. 651.

fallen into the same errors.[1] The Parsees, likewise, in order to elude the pursuit of Mussulman fanaticism, have more or less Shemiticised their entire mythology. The treatise of Hyde[2] on the religion of the ancient Persians, so imperfect as a picture of the true Zoroastrian institutions, unknown at the time when Hyde wrote in 1700, but so curious as a picture of old Persian traditions disfigured by Islamism, presents at every step, names of Hebrew patriarchs, substituted for those of the heroes of Persia. Finally, the *Ardaï Viraf Nameh*, of the period of the Sassanides, presents the extraordinary phenomenon of a Jewish book, "The Ascension of Isaiah," changed bodily into full-blown Mazdeism, and applied to a pretended sage, contemporary with Ardíshir Bábíkán, Ardaï Viraf. The habit of fraud and untruth which infested the East towards the close of the

[1] Chwolson, Die Ssabier, I. p. 648 ff.

[2] Hist. Religionis Vett. Persarum, eorumque Magorum, etc. Lond. 1760.

period of the Seleucides, has furnished criticism with enigmas which cannot be explained; for those natural deductions, which are so sure a guide, in considering honest productions of the mind, are entirely at fault, when dealing with these equivocal and artificial compositions, the fruit of enfeebled reason and sordid passions.

To the best of my belief, then, a very limited range must be assigned to the Nabathæan school. This school presents to us the last phase of Babylonian literature, that which extends from the first centuries of our era, or, if you will, from the period of the Seleucides or Arsacides, to the Mussulman invasion. This literature, stricken to death by Islámism, dragged out a miserable existence during the Middle Ages, among the poor sect of the Sabians, Nazoreans, or Christians of St. John, and sank to an unheard-of degree of degradation and extravagance in their writings. The works translated by Ibn Wahshíya, and the books of the Mendaïtes, are to us productions of one and

the same literature, with this difference, that the books preserved and probably re-written or re-modelled by the Mendaïtes have suffered from the influence of Parseeism, and followed that fatal growth of imbecility which the East was not able to resist. As to the Nabathæan language, it is no longer doubtful that it was identical with that of the Mendaïtes;[1] and it was probably from manuscripts, analogous to those which are termed Sabian in our libraries, that Ibn Wahshíya made his translations.

Who can assert that we have here an intellectual group of which it is impossible to prove its origin and unity? Take away, to avoid the appearance of begging the question, the four Nabathæan works which have come down to us, still what Arabian writers inform us concerning the Sabians; what we know of the School of Harran, which perpetuated the traditions of the Syro-Babylonian school, improved by hard

[1] See Histoire Générale des Langues Sémitiques, l. III., c. ii., sect. 82.

study, to the twelfth century of our era;[1] what we read of science and philosophy in Arabian historians,—Sáid of Tolèdo,[2] Mohammed Ibn Ishąk, Jémal-eddín Ibn al-Kifti, Ibn Abi-Occibia, Abúl Pharágius—on the origin of various branches of knowledge, and concerning the lives of certain philosophers who have become subjects of fiction, together with the Mussulman legends of Edris, identified with Enoch, Hermes, Otarid; a sort of scientific mythology received by all learned Arabs, and which is not of Moslem origin; all proceed, I maintain, evidently from the same homogeneous school, *sui generis*, the writings of which were composed in an Aramaic dialect.[3] A host of facts prove that Babylon was the theatre of a great upheaving of ideas

[1] See the learned work of M. Chwolson: Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus, St. Petersburgh, 1856.

[2] This source, less known than the others, will appear one of the most important, when M. Schefer has published the *Kitáb tabacáth ul-úmem*, of which he possesses a manuscript, the only complete one, I believe, in Europe.

[3] Journal Asiatique, March-April, 1854, p. 263; August-Sept., 1854, pp. 181, 187-188; Bar Hebræi Chron. Syriacum, pp. 176-177 of the text; pp. 180-181 of the translation.

in the first centuries of our era.[1] The Jews displayed a literary activity which, beyond doubt, did not remain shut up in the bosom of their communities. The Gnostic sects, Pérates, Elchasaïtes, etc., developed themselves with a boldness and liberty which mark at least an awakened intellect. The wrestling of the Syrian Christians—St. Ephraim, the Syrian,[2] for instance—against the Chaldæans, presumes that Christianity found there the most formidable resistance which it had yet encountered. Finally, I do not doubt that an attentive analysis of Greek manuscripts on astrology, on genethliacs, etc., made with a preoccupation of ideas awakened by the labours of Dr. Chwolson, may show this result, that our

[1] On the various Schools of Babylonia, and on the Babylonian sages, Cidénas, Nabúriánus, Sudínus, Séleucus, see Strabo (XVI. i. 6); Pliny (VI. xxx. 6); the *Kitáb el-fihrist* (Zeitschrift der Morgenl. Gesellschaft, 1859, p. 628); the work before cited of Saïd (pp. 21-22 of the MS. of M. Schefer). See also Stanley, Histoire de la Philosophie Orient., p. 14 ff. Brucker, Historia Critica Philosophiæ, I. p. 130 ff. Unfortunately the dates put us completely at fault here.

[2] Bp. Jeremy Taylor hence calls Ephraim, the Syrian, the Destruction of Heresies.—*Translator's note.*

libraries, in Greek no less than in Arabic manuscripts, contain considerable fragments of Nabathæan literature. I will only offer one example, because it presents the singular instance of a discovery made with extraordinary penetration, by a scholar of the great French school of the early part of the seventeenth century, and which, buried in oblivion for nearly two hundred years, has acquired an unexpected importance from the researches of modern criticism. In the preface[1] to his treatise, *De Annis Climactericis et Antiqua Astrologia* (Leyde, 1648), Salmasius, after having quoted Tenkelúshá according to Nasireddín Tousi, adds: "تنكلوشا autem sive Tenkelus ille Babylonius quem memorat Nasirodinus, is omnino est qui Τεῦκρος Βαβυλώνιος Græcis vocatur, et fortasse in scriptis Græcorum perperam hodie legitur Τεύκρος pro Τέυκρος, idque deflexum ex illo nomine Babylonio *Tenclus*. Nisi sit verius Græcos ad nomen sibi familiare propter adfinitatem soni vocabulum

[1] This preface is not paged; the catch word of the leaf is *c.* 3.

Chaldæorum deflexisse, ut mos est illis. Nam Τεῦκρος Græcum nomen est, non Τένκρος nec Τένκλος." One is struck with admiration at the quick perception of a scholar, who deduced from the aspect alone of this singular name of the author, what Dr. Chwolson, with all his tact, has failed to do from the work itself, after having read the whole of it. There is, indeed, no room to doubt that this Tenkelúshá al-Babéli of Arabic and Persian manuscripts[1] is the Τεῦκρος Βαβυλώνιος, called also Τεῦκχρος, *Teucer*, *Zeuchrus*, *Zeuchus*, author of genethliacs, quoted by Psellus, by Antiochus the Apotelesmatist, and by many others,[2] and

[1] The work of Tenkelúshá is often represented as a book of paintings by the Arabs and Persians (See Chwolson, p. 140 ff. Hyde, de Vett. Pers. Rel., pp. 282-283). This is easily understood, on looking at the manuscripts on genethliacs still in vogue in the East (our Paris manuscript, *Supplément Turc*, No. 93, for instance). The numerous illustrations with which they are decorated make them resemble albums at the first glance.

[2] See Salmasii Opera Critica, præf. leaf, *c*; and his Exercitationes Plinianæ in Solinum (Paris, 1629), pp. 651-655; Brucker, Historia Crit. Philos. t. I. p. 130; Fabricii Biblioth. Græca, Harles, tom. IV pp. 148, 166; Paradoxographi Westermanni, præf. p. 47 ff.; Miller, Journal des Savants, Oct., 1839, p. 607, note. M. Miller has pointed out to me other quotations from the same author in the great astronomical compilation contained in the MSS.

of whom, at least, extracts exist in our collections of Greek manuscripts.[1] The contents of these extracts tally precisely with what we know, from Dr. Chwolson, of the work of Tenkélúshá. All tends to the be-

2420, 2424 of the Bibliothique Imperiale (fol. 82 of the 2nd part of the first manuscript, and fo. 31 of the second), and in the abridgement of the Thesaurus Talism. of Antiochus, abridged by Rhétorius (No. 1991 of the Bibl. Imp., fol. 118). The quotation from Porphyry, mentioned by Salmasius and Westermann, is erroneous: the work which they had in view is by this Antiochus. (See Fabricii Bibl. Græca, Harles, tom. IV. pp. 151, 166; tom. V. p. 741). I do not know why Fabricius proposes to identify Teucer with Lasbas.

[1] In particular one fragment entitled Τεύχρου Περὶ τῶν παραναπελλόντων, in the grand astrological collection of manuscripts 2420, 2424 of the Bibl. Imp. fol. 89 of the 3rd part of the first, fol. 134 of the 5th part of the second. This second reference corresponds with that of Labbe, Nova Bibl. MSS. Libror. (Paris, 1653), p. 278. The same fragment is mentioned by Bandini (Catal. Codd. Gr. Bibl. Laurent. II. col. 60, No. xiii.), under this title: Περὶ τῶν παραναπελλόντων τοῖς ιθ' ζῳδίοις κατὰ Τεῦκρον. It appears more fully in the manuscript of Florence. M. Miller, to whom I addressed myself to discover the manuscript cited by Labbe, and to whom I owe the preceding information, adds the following note: "According to the passage of Michel Psellus, quoted by Salmasius (Exerc. Plin. p. 651), without saying from whence he took it, and which I have also found in the Greek manuscript 1630, fol. 228, Teucer must have written many works (βιβλίων), among others: 1st, Περὶ τῶν ἐν οὐρανῷ ζῳδίων; 2nd, Περὶ τῶν παραναπελλόντων (this is the work already mentioned); 3rd, Περὶ τῶν λεγομένων δεκανῶν." We should also examine Philosophumena, cura Duncker and Schneidewin, p. 84, etc., and Bardesanus, in Cureton's Spicil. Syriac, p. 24 ff.

lief that the true name of this Helleno-Babylonian was Τεῦκρος, and that Tenklúsh is an alteration.[1] What proves this, and gives, at the same time, a remarkable confirmation to the preceding opinion, is, that in the *Kitáb el-fihrist*, by the side of Tenklus, figures a طينقروس=*Tincruš*, whose legend has a wonderful resemblance to that of Tenklus, and to whom a work is ascribed identical in title with that of Tenklus. It is evident that these two authors are but one and the same, and that their names represent two forms of the primitive Τεῦκρος.[2] There is nothing surprising in such a name, when borne by a Babylonian sage, since in

[1] In fact, the termination *úsh* is that of all the Greek names which have passed into the Arabic and Persian. It is known that *l* and *r* are confounded in Babylonian, and that these two letters only make one in Pehlevi. The termination *a* is the Aramaic emphasis. The *Kitáb el-fihrist* gives the form Tenkélúsh.

[2] Look to the analysis of *Kitáb el-fihrist* given by M. Fluegel, in the Zeitschrift der Morgenl. Gesellschaft, 1859, p. 628. M Fluegel reads erroneously Tinacrius. The titles given in the *Kitáb el-fihrist* are: 1st, for Tenklus, كتاب الوجوه والحدود; 2nd, for Tincrus, كتاب المواليد على الوجوه والحدود, both o which correspond sufficiently with the Greek titles referred to above.

the work of Said, entitled *Kitáb tabacáth al-úmen*, we find a Babylonian scholar figuring as *Istéfan al-Babéli*,[1] whom the Arabian author places confidently in the times of Jethro, in spite of his Greek name and Christian prefix of Stephanus. If some Hellenistic scholar were to take the trouble of carefully examining the Greek manuscripts on astrology and magic which have come down to us, I have no doubt that he would find there a host of texts, really Babylonian, kindred to those to which Dr. Chwolson has drawn our attention.

From all this we may deduce, I imagine, a complete idea of the intellectual state of Babylonia, in the first centuries of our era; but it will not, as Dr. Chwolson believes, furnish us with science at all equal to that of the Greeks. What was deficient in this movement was neither activity nor extent; it lacked earnestness and method. If we seek to appreciate, as a whole, the part which Babylon took in the grand work of civili-

[1] Pp. 21-22 of the manuscript of M. Schefer.

zation, we are astonished to find all the productions of the Babylonian mind tainted by one radical vice. Judicial astrology, sorcery, a branch of gnosticism, and the first germs of the Cabbala—such are the wretched gifts which Babylon has presented to the world. There is no doubt that Babylon is gravely responsible for the enfeeblement of the mind in the first centuries of our era, and that the epidemic of superstition and chimerical science, which prevailed at that epoch, must, in a great measure, be set down to Chaldæan influence. It is certainly possible that Babylon may have possessed real science, before the time at which she devoted herself to this unhappy propagation of error. Judicial astrology leads to the belief of an earlier regular astronomy; magic, which pretends to direct the secret forces of Nature, presupposes a certain development of the physical sciences.[1] But we

[1] Similar results have happened to alchemy. The alchemy of the middle ages, judged according to the extravagance of the sixteenth century, was universally in the West, since the thirteenth century, a chemical labour firmly established, but which at present is allowed to lie all but forgotten in manuscripts.

cannot allow ourselves to doubt that Babylonian studies had greatly degenerated at the time of the Seleucides; one cannot, in fact, conceive that Babylonia should have spread abroad nothing but chimerical science,[1] had she possessed a sound philosophy. We cannot, then, shut our eyes to the exaggeration of the part which Dr. Chwolson ascribes to Babylonia in the history of the human mind. Rectitude of thought, surety of judgment, exclusive love of truth—without which science cannot keep itself from degenerating into routine, and interested self-complacency —are the essential qualities of philosophical creation. It is because she possessed these qualities, to a degree of originality which constitutes genius, that Greece holds a place in the education of the mind, of which it is not probable that she will ever be dispossessed.

[1] The same may be said of Egypt. Egyptian and Babylonian science appear to have had analogous destinies. Lacking that purely analytical, experimental, and rational principle which gave force to the Greek, as it still does to the modern mind, they have not been able to defend themselves from the charge of charlatanism, a term fatal to all culture which rests on anything but purely scientific researches.

THE

POSITION

OF THE

SHEMITIC NATIONS

IN THE

HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION.

An Inaugural Lecture,

DELIVERED IN THE COLLEGE OF FRANCE,

ON ASSUMING THE CHAIR OF THE

HEBREW, CHALDAIC, & SYRIAC PROFESSORSHIP,

BY

M. ERNEST RENAN,

MEMBRE DE L'INSTITUT, ETC. ETC.

81883

ADVERTISEMENT.

"A YEAR or two ago," says a writer in the *London Review* of the 8th of March last, "a lady who was an intimate friend of Queen Hortense, and who had known Louis Napoleon from his boyhood, drew his attention to the great literary merit of Monsieur Ernest Renan. The Emperor, ever anxious to attract to his side the leading minds of France, listened with interest, and lost no time in casting about for some means to get Monsieur Renan into his service. This, however, was not so easy, for Monsieur Renan was a member of what we may call the party of the Institut, and was utterly opposed to the existing state of things. At length, however, an interview was arranged, and a series of negotiations commenced, which ended in Monsieur Renan's agreeing to go to Syria, with a view to carrying out, under the auspices of the French Government, explorations and excavations amongst the old Phœnician cities. He went thither, and he returned thence, unpledged to the Government. His journey was saddened by a most melancholy event in his family, but he accomplished his

object, and has come back to prepare for the press a great work on Phœnician antiquities, and to put into shape the numerous new ideas which he had gained in the East.

"A month or two after his return, the Imperial Government appointed him to the chair of Hebrew. His fitness for the post is beyond dispute. He is incomparably the first Shemitic scholar in France, and is one of the very few Frenchmen whom the proudest of German *literati* allow to be on a level with themselves in learning, while they speak with the highest admiration of his immeasurably greater skill in clothing his ideas in simple and eloquent language. On this point we may speak with some certainty, because it is only a few weeks since we had the pleasure of conveying to Monsieur Renan the cordial congratulations of the greatest German scholar whose line of study has coincided with his labours. Some symptoms of disapprobation having reached the ears of Government, when Monsieur Renan's appointment was first talked of, it was proposed that the title of the chair to which he was nominated should be the 'Professorship of the Shemitic Languages as compared with each other,' and not the old title of 'Professorship of Hebrew.'"

"It was understood," adds a writer in the *Literary Gazette* of the same date, "when the

chair was offered him, that he was to be careful of entering on the arena of religious discussion. It would seem that in the broad generalizations which he has made on the distinctive characters of the Indo-Germanic and Shemitic races, he has handled a very delicate topic with great freedom. The delivery of the lecture gained for him a most gratifying and unexpected exhibition of feeling on the part of the Paris students, so prompt and decided, and sometimes so despotic in their verdicts on public characters, whose manifestations, however, are delightful even to professors, and whose opinions have to be considered, no less by journalists, as a power in the country.

"M. Renan's friends were not without some apprehensions about his reception, as the student-population of the present time is passionately sensitive on all topics of a religious nature, owing to the interest which is felt on the Italo-Roman question. The lecturer, however, though he came out triumphantly from this ordeal, met with less favour from the authorities of the *Collége de France* and the Government, for his lectures have been suspended."[1]

[1] Since this was written M. Renan has been allowed to resume his lectures. Thursdays are to be devoted to Philological Lectures, without political or religious discussion, and Saturdays to Illustrations of the Book of Job.

The translator does not enter the arena either in defence of M. Renan or of the French Government. In England his appointment would either never have been made, or never have been rescinded upon the mere pressure of any set of men of extreme opinions, whatever their rank or profession. As it is, the *London Review* is not far wrong in saying, "It is difficult to say how much harm may be done to the Imperial Government by too frequently yielding to the noisy protests of enemies who vent their spite by interrupting plays and lectures. Not to have appointed Professor Renan, would have been but a small matter. 'Here is another instance,' people would have said, 'of an able man passed over on account of his political opinions.' First, however, to appoint him, and then to suspend him in deference to the clamour of the Ultramontane faction, is to give the bitterest enemies of the present *régime* a most unnecessary triumph."

The lecture is here presented to the reader as sent forth by the author in print, being simply a faithful translation of the French original. Truth has nothing to fear from error; constant friction does but improve its polish, even as it removes the rust from steel.

May, 1862.

PREFACE.

In reproducing this discourse, it is a pleasing duty to me to express my thanks to the kind and enlightened audience, which, perceiving with much tact that it involved a question of liberty, upheld me during its delivery. To interrupt an intellectual exercise at which one is not compelled to be present, appears to me, at all times, to be an illiberal action; it is to oppose oneself with violence to the opinion of another; to confound two things, totally distinct: the admitted right of fault-finding, according to liking or conscience; and the pretended right of stifling, by one's own authority, notions which are looked upon as objectionable. Who does not see that this last pretension is the source of all violence and all oppression?

In the teachings of the College of France, surrounded by so many safeguards, this suppression of speech seems to me particularly out of place. The nomination of the Professors to that institution is made on the presentation of the Professors of the College, met together for the purpose, and on that of the requisite class of the Institute. This double presentation is not an indisputable authority; but it suffices, at least, to show that he who is honoured with it cannot be accused of presumptuous intentions, when he ascends a chair to which he has been appointed by suffrages so empowered.

I was desirous that the form of this first lecture should not mislead the public as to the nature of my teaching. Downwards, from Vatable and Mercier to M. Quatremère, the chair to which I have had the honour to be presented and named, has borne a scientific (*technique*) and special character. Without fettering in any way my liberty or that of my successor, I should

feel that I was doing an injury to science by an appearance of disregard to this honoured tradition. What would become of our graver studies, if they had not an inviolable sanctuary in the College of France? What of high cultivation of the intellect, if mere general expositions, well enough, perhaps, when delivered in the presence of a numerous audience, are to stifle instruction in a more severe form in an institution which, above all others, is destined to endure as the School of deep scientific research? I should be most culpable, if the future could charge me with having contributed to such a change. The progress of science is compromised, if we do not profit by deep thought and reflection; if any one thinks he fulfils the duties of life in holding blindly the opinions of any party on all things; if fickleness, exclusive opinions, abrupt and peremptory forms, suppress problems, instead of solving them. Oh, that the fathers of modern intellect

comprehended better the holiness of thought! Noble and venerable shades of Reuchlin, of Henry Stephens, of Casaubon, of Descartes, rise up and teach us what price you put upon truth; by what toil you attained it; what you suffered for it! It was the comprehensive speculations of twenty persons in the seventeenth century which entirely changed the notions of civilized nations throughout the world; it was the obscure labours of some poor scholars of the sixteenth century which founded historical criticism, and opened up a total revolution in ideas on the past history of man.

I have had too sensible an experience of the intellectual discernment of the public, not to feel certain that all those who supported me yesterday will approve of my following a like course, the most profitable assuredly for science and the wholesome discipline of the mind.

Paris, February 23rd, 1862.

AN

INAUGURAL LECTURE,

ETC. ETC.

GENTLEMEN,

I am proud to ascend into this chair, the most ancient in the College of France, conspicuous for eminent men in the sixteenth century, and occupied in our own day by a scholar of such merit as M. Quatremère. In founding the College of France as a sanctuary for free science and learning, King Francis the First laid down as a constitutive law of this great establishment, complete independence of criticism, unbiased search after truth and impartial discussion, bounded by no rules but those of good taste and sincerity. Such, gentlemen, is precisely the spirit which I would

bring into my teaching. I know the difficulties which are inseparable from the chair which I have the honour to occupy. It is the privilege and the danger of Shemitic studies to touch on the most important problems in the history of the human race. Freedom of thought knows no limit; but it necessitates that mankind should have reached that degree of calm contemplation, where it is not required to recognise God in each particular order of facts, simply because He is seen in all things. Liberty, gentlemen, when thoroughly understood, allows these opposing claims to exist side by side. I hope, by your aid, that this course will be a proof of it. As I shall not introduce any dogmatism into my teaching; as I shall always confine myself to appealing to your reason, while proposing to you, what I believe to be the most probable, leaving you always the most perfect freedom of judgment, who can complain? Only those who believe they have a monopoly of truth. But such persons must renounce now their

claims to the mastery of the world. The Galileo of our day will not retract what he knows to be the truth, on bended knee.

You will permit me, in the performance of my task, to descend to the smallest details, and to be habitually technical; and Science, gentlemen, only attains its sacred object, the discovery of truth, on condition of being special and rigorous. Everyone is not intended to be a chemist, physician, philologist; to shut himself up in his laboratory, to follow up for years an experiment, or a calculation; everyone, however, participates in the great philosophical results of chemistry, medicine, and philology. To present these results, divested of the processes which have served to discover them, is a useful thing which Science should not forbid. But such is not the mission of the College of France: all the most special and most minute processes of Science should be here laid bare. Laborious demonstrations, patient analysis, excluding it is true no general development, no legitimate digres-

sion: such is the programme of our course. It is, so to speak, the laboratory of philological science thrown open to the public, that it may call into being special vocations, and that the world may form an idea of the means employed to arrive at Truth.

To-day, gentlemen, I should depart from what is customary, and disappoint your expectations, were I to inaugurate this course by mere technical developments. I would fain recall to you the memory of that eminent scholar whom I have the honour to succeed —M. Stephen Quatremère. But this duty having been already fulfilled in a manner which does not allow me to repeat it, I shall dedicate this first lecture to conversing with you on the general character of the nations whose language and literature we shall study together; on the part they have filled in history; and on the portion which they have contributed to the common work of civilization.

The most important results to which historical and philological science has arrived

during the last half century, have been to shew, in the general development of our races, two elements of such a nature which, mixing in unequal proportions, have made the woof of the tissue of history. From the seventeenth century—and, indeed, almost from the middle ages—it has been acknowledged that the Hebrews, the Phœnicians, the Carthagenians, the Syrians, the Babylonians (at least from a certain period), the Arabs, and the Abyssinians, have spoken languages most intimately connected. Eichhorn, in the last century, proposed to call these languages Shemitic, and this name, most inexact as it is, may still be used.

A most important and gratifying discovery was made in the beginning of our century. Thanks to the knowledge of Sanscrit, due to English scholars at Calcutta, German philologists, especially M. Bopp, have laid down sure principles, by means of which it is shown that the ancient idioms of Brahmanic India, the different dialects of Persia, the Armenian, many dia-

lects of the Caucasus, the Greek and Latin languages, with their derivatives, the Slavonic, German, and Celtic, form one vast family entirely distinct from the Shemitic group, under the name of Indo-Germanic, or Indo-European.

The line of demarcation, revealed by the comparative study of languages, was soon strengthened by the study of literatures, institutions, manners, and religions. If we know how to assume the right point of view in such a careful comparison, it is seen that the ancient literatures of India, Greece, Persia, and the German or Teutonic nations, are of a common stock, and exhibit deeply rooted similarity of mind. The literature of the Hebrews and that of the Arabs, have much in common; while on the contrary they have as little as possible with those which I have just named. We should search in vain for an epic or a tragedy among the Shemitic nations; as vainly should we search among the Indo-European nations for anything analogous to the *Kasida* of

the Arabs, and that species of eloquence which distinguishes the Jewish prophets and the Koran. The same must be said of their institutions. The Indo-European nations had, from their beginning, an old code, of which the remains are found in the Brahmanas of India, in the forms of the Romans, and in the laws of the Celts, the Germans, and the Slaves; the patriarchal life of the Hebrews and Arabs was governed, beyond contradiction, by laws totally different. Finally, the comparison of religions has thrown decisive light on this question. By the side of comparative philology in Germany there has of late years arisen the science of comparative mythology, which has shown that all the Indo-European nations had, in their beginning, with the same language also the same religion, of which each carried away scattered fragments on leaving their common cradle; this religion, the worship of the powers and phenomena of Nature leading by philosophical development to a sort of

Pantheism. The religious development of the Shemitic nations obeyed laws totally different. Judaism, Christianity, Islamism, possess a character of dogmatism, absolutism, and severe monotheism which distinguishes them radically from the Indo-European,—or, as we term them, the Pagan religions.

Thus we see two individualities, perfectly recognizable, which occupy between them, in some manner, nearly the whole field of history, and which are, as it were, the two poles of the axis of civilization. I say nearly the whole field of history; for besides these two great individualities, there are still two or three, which are yet sufficiently palpable for the purposes of science, and of which the action has been considerable. Putting China aside, as a world by itself, and the Tartar races, which have only acted as inherent scourges to destroy the works of others, Egypt has had a considerable part in the history of the world; yet Egypt is neither Shemitic nor Indo-European; nor is Babylon a purely Shemitic

creation. There was there, it seems to me, a first type of civilization analogous to that of Egypt. It may be said even, generally, that before the entrance of the Indo-European and Shemitic nations on the field of history, the world had already very ancient civilizations, to which we are indebted, if not for moral, at any rate for the elements of industry, and a long experience of material life. But all this is yet but dimly shadowed by history; all this fades before such facts as the mission of Moses, the invention of alphabetical writing, and the conquests of Cyrus and Alexander; the rule of the world by the genius of the Greeks, Christianity, and the Roman Empire; Islamism, the Germanic conquest, Charlemagne, and the Revival of letters; the Reformation, Philosophy, the French Revolution, and the conquest of the world by modern Europe. Here, then, is the great current of history; this great current is formed by the mingling of two streams, in comparison with which all its other confluents are but rivulets.

Let us try to trace in this complex whole the part played by each of the two great races, which, by their combined action, and more often by their antagonism, have conducted the course of the world to the point on which we stand.

Let me explain. When I speak of the blending of the two races, it is simply in respect to the blending of ideas, and, if I may venture to express myself, to follow labour historically considered, that I would use the term. The Indo-European and the Shemitic nations are in our day still perfectly distinct. I say nothing of the Jews, whose singular and wonderful historical destiny, has given them an exceptional position among mankind, and who, except in France, which has set the world an example in upholding the principle of a purely ideal civilization, disregarding all difference of races, form everywhere a distinct and separate society. The Arab, and, in a more general sense, the Mussulman, are separated from us in the present day more than

they have ever been. The Mussulman (the Shemitic mind is everywhere represented in our times by Islamism) and the European, in the presence of one another, are like beings of a different species, having no one habit of thought and feeling in common. But the progress of mankind is accomplished by the contest of contrary tendencies; by a sort of polarisation, in consequence of which each idea has its exclusive representatives in this world. It is as a whole, then, that these contradictions harmonise, and that profound peace results from the shock of apparently inimical elements.

This admitted, if we seek out what the Shemitic nations have contributed to that organic and living whole, which we call civilization, we shall find, first, that in Political Economy we owe them nothing. Political life is, perhaps, that which is most innate and peculiar to Indo-European nations; for these nations alone have known liberty, and comprehended, in fact, the constitution of the State and the liberty of the

Subject. It is true they have by no means at all times reconciled these two opposite necessities equally well. But we never find amongst them those great single despotisms, destroying all individuality, and reducing man to a sort of abstract state and nameless function, as we see him in Egypt, Babylonia, China, and in Mussulman and Tartar despotisms. Take, one after another, the little municipal republics of Greece and Italy, the Germanic feudality, the grand centralized organizations of which Rome gave the first model, and of which the French Revolution reproduced the ideal, and you will always find a vigorous moral element, a strong sense of the public weal, and sacrifice to one general end. Individuality was but little secured in Sparta; the petty democracies of Athens, and of Italy in the middle ages, were nearly as ferocious as the most venal tyrant; the Roman Empire reached (partly, it is true, through the influence of the East) to an intolerable despotism; German feudality bordered upon

brigandage; the French monarchy, under Louis XIV., almost emulated the excesses of the Sassanidan or Mongol dynasties; the French Revolution, while calling into being with incomparable vigour the principle of unity in the State, frequently compromised liberty in no trifling degree. But prompt reactions have always saved these nations from the consequences of their errors.

Not so in the East. The East, especially the Shemitic East, has never known any medium between the complete anarchy of the wandering Arabs and sanguinary and unmitigated despotism. The idea of public weal, of public good, is completely wanting among these nations. True and complete liberty, such as the Anglo-Saxon race has realized, and grand State organizations, such as the Roman Empire and France have engendered, have been equally unknown to them. The ancient Hebrews and the Arabs have been, and are at short intervals, the most free of men; but conditionally subject to the chance of having on

the morrow a chief who takes off their heads at pleasure. And when that happens, no one complains of violated rights. David attained his kingdom by means of a sort of energetic brigandage (*condottiere*), which was not inconsistent with his being a very religious man, and a king after God's own own heart; Solomon succeeded to and maintained the throne by the same means as are used by Sultans in every age, which did not prevent his passing for the wisest of kings. When the Prophets attacked royalty, it was not in the name of a political right; it was in the name of the Theocracy. Theocracy, anarchy, despotism—such, gentlemen, is, in few words, the epitome of Shemitic political economy; happily it is not ours. Political economy deduced from Holy Scripture (very imperfectly deduced, it is true) by Bossuet, is a detestable system. In politics as in poetry, in religion, and in philosophy, the duty of the Indo-European nations is to search out subtleties, to reconcile antagonistic claims, and that com-

plexity of ideas, so utterly unknown to Shemitic nations, whose organizations have always been of distressing and fatal simplicity.

In Art and Poetry, what do we owe to them? Nothing in Art. These nations have but little of Art in them; our Art comes entirely from Greece. In Poetry, however, without being their dependents, we hold in common with them more than one point of resemblance. The Psalms have become, in some respects, one of our sources of poetry. Hebrew poetry has taken its place among us, by the side of Greek poetry, not as furnishing any positive school, but as constituting a poetical ideality, a sort of Olympus, where, by dint of an accepted prestige, everything is tinted by a lambent glory. Milton, Lamartine, Lamennais, would not have existed at all, or certainly not as they are, without the Psalms. Here, again, all the shadows that are delicate, all that are profound, are our own work. The subject which is essentially

poetic is the destiny of man; his melancholy vicissitudes, his uneasy search into causes, his just complaint against Heaven. We have no need to learn this from any one. The eternal school for this is the soul of each individual.

In Science and Philosophy we are exclusively Greek The search into causes, knowledge for the sake of knowledge, is a thing of which there is no trace previous to Greece; a process we have learnt from her alone. Babylon had Science, but not the real element of science, an absolute fixidity of the laws of Nature. Egypt had knowledge of geometry, but she did not produce the Elements of Euclid. As to the old Shemitic mind, it was in its nature anti-philosophical and anti-scientific. In Job, the search into causes is almost represented as impiety. In Ecclesiastes, science is declared a vanity. The author, prematurely disgusted, vaunts his having learnt all that is under the sun, and of having found nothing but weariness. Aristotle, nearly his

contemporary, and who had more right to say that he had exhausted the universe, never speaks of weariness. The wisdom of Shemitic nations never rises above parables and proverbs. Arabian science and Arabian philosophy are often alluded to, and, in fact, during one or two centuries in the middle ages, the Arabs were our teachers; but it was only until we were acquainted with the Greek originals. This Arabian science and philosophy was only a puerile rendering of Greek science and philosophy. From the time when Greece herself reappeared, these pitiful versions became valueless; and it was not without cause that all scholars at the revival of letters commenced a real crusade against them. When closely examined, moreover, this Arabian science has nothing Arabian in it. Its foundation is purely Greek; among its originators there is not a single true Shemite; they were all Spaniards and Persians who wrote in Arabic. The philosophical part filled by the Jews in the middle ages was

that of simple interpreters. The Jewish philosophy of that period is Arabian philosophy, without modification. One page of Roger Bacon contains more of the true spirit of Science than all this second hand knowledge, devoid of true originality, and respectable only as a link in the chain of tradition.

If we examine the question in a moral and social point of view, we shall find that Shemitic morality is, at times, very high and very pure. The code attributed to Moses contains exalted ideas of right. The prophets are sometimes most eloquent tribunes. The moralists, Jesus the son of Sirach, and Hillel, rise to a surprising loftiness. Nor must we forget that the morality of the Gospel was first preached in a Shemitic tongue. On the other hand the Shemitic character is generally hard, narrow, egotistical. In this race we find strong passions, perfect devotion, and incomparable qualities. It rarely possesses that delicacy of moral feeling which seems

to be the peculiar inheritance of the Germanic and Celtic races. The tender, deep, melancholy emotions, those dreams of the infinite in which all the powers of the soul are mingled, that great consciousness of duty, which alone gives a solid basis to our faith and our hopes, are the work of our race and our climate. Here, then, the labour is mingled. The moral education of mankind is not the exclusive merit of any race. The reason of this is perfectly simple. Morality does not teach more than Poetry; beautiful aphorisms do not make an honest man. Everyone finds good in the loftiness of his nature, and in the immediate revelation of his own heart.

As regards industry, invention, material civilization, we owe, beyond contradiction, much to the Shemitic nations. Our race, gentlemen, did not begin with a taste for comfort and for business. It was a moral, brave, and warlike race, jealous of liberty and honour, loving Nature, capable of self-devotion, preferring many things to life.

Commerce and the industrial arts were first carried on on a grand scale by a Shemitic people, or at least by a people speaking a Shemitic tongue,—the Phœnicians. In the middle ages, the Arabs and the Jews were also our masters in point of commerce. All European luxuries, from ancient times to the seventeenth century, came from the East. I speak of luxury, not of Art; there is a vast difference between the two. Greece, which, as regards taste, had an immense superiority over the rest of mankind, was not a land of luxury; there the vain magnificence of the palace of the great king was spoken of with contempt; and if we could be allowed to see the house of Pericles, we should probably scarcely think it habitable. I do not insist on this point; for then we should have to examine whether this Asiatic luxury, that of Babylon, for instance, were really the work of the Shemites? I, for one, doubt it. But one indisputable gift they made us, a gift of the highest order, and which

ought to place the Phœnicians nearly on a par with their brothers, the Hebrews and Arabs, in the history of progress,—our alphabet. You know that the characters which we now use are, through a thousand transformations, the same with which the Shemites first expressed the sounds of their language. The Greek and Latin alphabets, from which our European alphabets are all derived, are no other than the Phœnician alphabet. Phonetic writing, that luminous idea of expressing each articulation by a sign, and reducing these articulations to a small number—twenty-two,—was an invention of the Shemites. But for them, we should, perhaps, still be draggling on painfully with hieroglyphics. It may, therefore, be said, in one sense, that the Phœnicians, whose literature has so unhappily entirely disappeared, have thus fixed the essential condition to all firm and precise exercise of thought.

But I hasten to pass on, gentlemen, to the chief service which the Shemitic race

has rendered to the world, to its especial work, and, if one may be allowed the expression, its Providential mission. We do not owe to the Shemitic race our political existence, our Art, our Poetry, our Philosophy, nor our Science. For what, then, are we indebted to it? We owe to them Religion. The whole world, with the exception of India, China, Japan, and nations yet altogether savage, has adopted Shemitic religions. The civilized world numbers only Jews, Christians, and Mussulmans. The Indo-European race, in particular, except the Brahmanic family and the feeble remnants of the Parsees, has passed entirely over to Shemitic creeds. What has been the cause of this remarkable phenomenon? How is it that nations, which hold the guidance of the world, have abdicated their own creed to adopt that of those whom they have overcome?

The primitive worship of the Indo-European race, gentlemen, was as beautiful and full of depth as the imagination of the

people themselves. It was like an echo of Nature—a sort of Nature's hymn,—in which the idea of a single Cause appeared but fleetingly and with great indistinctness. It was a religion of childhood, full of simplicity and poetry, but which was sure to crumble away as thought became more active. Persia first effected its reform, which is connected with the name of Zoroaster, under influences, and at a period, of which we know nothing. Greece, in the time of Pisistratus, was even then dissatisfied with her religion, and cast her look towards the East. In the Roman epoch, the old Pagan worship had become altogether insufficient. It no longer appealed to the imagination; it addressed itself but feebly to the moral sentiment. The early embodiments of the powers of Nature had become but legends, at times amusing and pointed, but destitute of all religious value. It was exactly at this epoch that the civilised world found itself face to face with the Jewish religion.[1]

[1] M. Renan's views of Judaism and Christianity are peculiar,

Founded on the clear and simple dogma of Divine Unity, scattering naturalism and pantheism to the winds, by this phrase of marvellous precision: "In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth;" possessing a Law, a Book, the repository of elevated moral teachings and lofty religious poetry, Judaism had an incontestible superiority, and at that time it might have seemed possible to predict that some day the world would worship as the Jews; that is, leave its ancient mythology for monotheism. An extraordinary movement which took place at that moment, in the bosom of Judaism itself, decided the victory. Side by side with these grand and incomparable portions, Judaism contained the principle of a narrow formalism and fanaticism, both exclusive and disdainful of the foreigner. This was the Pharisaical spirit; in later times it engendered the Talmudical spirit.

belonging to the extreme advanced school of theology; and the expression of these views in the following passages led to the suppression of his course of lectures at the College of France, for a time.—*Translator's Note.*

If Judaism had been nothing but Pharisaism, it would have had no future. But this race possessed in itself a religious activity truly extraordinary. Moreover, like all great races, it nurtured opposite tendencies: it knew how to re-act against itself, and to acquire, where needed, qualities the most opposed to its defects. In the very midst of the tumultuous fermentation in which the Jewish nation was plunged, under the last Aramean princes, the most extraordinary moral event recorded in history came to pass in Galilee.

A man, to be compared with none other—so great indeed that, although every thing in these studies and in this place, should be viewed only by the light of Positive Science, I should be unwilling to contradict those who, struck by the exceptional character of his work, call him God—worked out a reform of Judaism, a reform of such depth, so individualized (*si individuelle*), that it was in truth a new creation in all its parts. Having attained a

higher degree of religious eminence than man had ever reached before, having come to look upon God in the relation of a son to a father, devoted to his work, with an oblivion of all beside, and an abnegation never before so loftily carried out, the victim at last of his idea, and deified by his death, Jesus founded the eternal religion of mankind,—the religion of the soul set free from all priesthood, all worship, all observances; accessible to all races, superior to the distinctions of caste—in one word—absolute. "Woman, the time is come when they will not worship any more in this mountain, nor at Jerusalem, but when the true worshippers will worship in spirit and in truth."[1] The genial centre to which man, for centuries to come, should trace back his joy, his hopes, his consolation, and his motives for well-doing,

[1] *Our version* :—"Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father .....But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (John iv. 21 and 23).—*Translator's Note.*

was established. The most abundant source of virtue which the sympathetic contact of a sublime perception has made to well up in the heart of man, was opened. The lofty conception of Jesus, scarcely comprehended by his disciples, sustained considerable diminution.

Nevertheless, Christianity prevailed from the first, and prevailed without limit above all other existing forms of faith. Those forms which did not aspire to any absolute worth, which had no solid organization, and which responded to nothing moral, made but feeble resistance. Some efforts made to reform them, in accordance with the new requirements of mankind, and to introduce into them an element of earnestness and morality,—the attempt of Julian, for instance,—completely failed. The Empire, which believed, not without reason, that its very element was threatened by the growth of a new power—the Church—resisted at first most energetically: it finished by adopting the faith

which it had battled against. All the people influenced by the culture of Greece and Rome, became Christians; the Germanic nations and the Slaves[1] followed somewhat later. Persia and India alone, of the Indo-European race, preserved, much altered it is true, the old faith of their ancestors, owing to their religious institutions being strongly and closely allied to the State. The Brahmanic race, above all, rendered to the world a scientific service of the highest order, by the preservation, with an exuberance of minute and touching precaution, of the most ancient hymns of that worship, the Vedas.

The religious fertility of the Shemitic race was not yet exhausted. After this unequalled victory, Christianity, taken up by Greek and Latin civilization, had become the property of the West; the East, its birthplace, was just the place where it encountered the greatest obstacles. Arabia especially, towards the seventh century, could

[1] The Slaves or the Slavonic race.

not make up its mind to become Christian. Wavering between Judaism and Christianity, between native superstition and memories of the old patriarchal worship, disgusted by the mythological elements which the Indo-European race had introduced into the heart of Christianity, she would return to the religion of Abraham. She founded Islamism. Islamism rose up in its turn with an immense superiority in the midst of the debased religions of Asia. With a single blow it overturned Parsee-ism, which had been strong enough to triumph over Christianity under the Sassanides, and reduced it to the position of a petty sect. India also saw, in turn, but without being converted, the Divine Unity proclaimed victoriously in the midst of her ancient Pantheon. Islamism, in a word, brought over to Monotheism, nearly all those pagan lands which Christianity had not yet converted. It is finishing its mission in our times by the conquest of Africa, which is now becoming almost entirely Mahometan. Thus with a few

exceptions of minor importance, the world in a manner has been entirely subdued by the spreading of Shemitic Monotheism.

Are we to admit, then, that the Indo-European nations have completely renounced their individuality in adopting the Shemitic creed? By no means. While adopting the Shemitic religion, we have greatly modified it. Christianity, in its usual acceptation, is in reality our own work; Primitive Christianity, consisting essentially, in the apocalyptic belief, of a kingdom of God yet to come, Christianity such as it appeared to the mind of a St. James, a Papias, was very different from our Christianity, overlaid with metaphysics by the Greek Fathers, and the Scholastic teaching of the middle ages, reduced to a system of morality and charity by the enlightenment of modern times. The victory of Christianity was only secured when it completely cast aside its Jewish clothing; when it became again what it had been in the lofty conception of its Founder, a creation divested of

the firm trammels of the Shemitic spirit. This is so true that Jews and Mahometans have nothing but aversion for this religion, the sister of their own; but which, in the hands of another race, has clothed itself with exquisite poetry, the enchanting adornment of romantic legends. Beings, gentle, sensitive, and imaginative, such as the author of *The Imitation of Christ*, such as the mystics of the middle ages, such as the saints in general, have professed a religion proceeding in truth from the Shemitic mind, but transformed in all its parts, by the genius of modern nations, especially by the Celtic and Germanic races. That depth of sentiment, that tender melancholy, found in the religion of a Francis of Assisi, of a Fra Angelico, were every way opposed to Shemitic genius, essentially hard and dry.

As for the future, gentlemen, I foresee, more and more, the triumph of Indo-European genius. From the sixteenth century, one great fact, till then doubtful, continues to manifest itself with striking energy; it

is the decided victory of Europe, it is the accomplishment of the old Shemitic saying: "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant."[1]

Until that period, Shemitism was master on its own ground. The Mussulman East surpassed the West, had better armies, and a better policy, and supplied the latter with wealth, learning, and civilization. Now their respective parts are changed. European genius has been developing itself with incomparable grandeur; Islamism, on the contrary, has been as slowly crumbling away; in our times it is falling with a crash. In the present day, the one essential condition for the expansion of European civilization is the destruction of the principle of Shemitic action (*chose*)—the destruction of the theocratic power of Islamism, and consequently the destruction of Islamism itself; for Islamism can only exist as an official religion: reduce it to the position of

[1] Genesis ix. 27.

a religion, free and individual, and it will perish. Islamism is not a merely State religion, like Catholicism was in France under Louis XIV, and still is in Spain; it is a religion which excludes the State, an organization of which the Papal States offer the only type in Europe. War unceasing is there,—war which will only cease when the last son of Ismael shall have died with misery, or been driven by terror to the depths of the desert. Islamism is the perfect negative of Europe; Islamism is fanaticism, such as Spain in the time of Philip II., and Italy in the time of Pius V., scarcely knew. Islamism is contempt of science, suppression of civil society; it is the frightful weakness of the Shemitic spirit, narrowing the mind of man; closing it against every delicate conception, every fine feeling, every rational research, to place it immovably in front of one unceasing tautology: *God is God.*

The future, gentlemen, then belongs to Europe, and to Europe alone. Europe will subdue the world, and will spread over it its

religion, which is individual right, liberty, respect,—that belief which breathes a something divine into the heart of man. In the course of events, the progress of Indo-European nations will consist in separating itself more and more from the Shemitic mind. Our religion will retain less and less of Judaism; more and more will it resist all political organization in matters concerning the soul. It will become the religion of the heart,—the inmost poetry of each human being. In morality we shall attain to a delicate nicety unknown to the beings of the Old Alliance; we shall become more and more Christians. In politics we shall reconcile two things always ignored by Shemitic nations,—liberty, and a strong political organization. In poetry, we shall require an expression of that instinct of infinity which is at once our delight and our dread: in either case, our true nobility. In philosophy, instead of scholastic dogmatism, we shall open up vistas of the general system of the world. In short,

we must study every delicacy of shade, require subtilty instead of dogmatism, the relative instead of the absolute. This is, in my opinion, our future, if the future mean progress. Shall we attain to a more certain knowledge of the destiny of Man and his connection with the Infinite? Shall we understand more clearly the law of the origin of being, the nature of perception, what life is, and what personality? Will the world, without returning to credulity, and while persisting in the path of positive philosophy, find again true joy, ardour, hope, calm contemplation? Will it some day be worth while to live; and will the man who believes in duty, find in that duty his reward? Will that science to which we devote our lives repay us for what we sacrifice to her? I know not. All that is certain is this: in seeking for Truth in a scientific way we shall have performed our duty. If Truth is sad, we shall at least have the consolation of having found it by recognized rules; it may be said that we deserved to find it

more consoling; we shall bear this testimony, that we have been true and sincere at heart.

Truth to say, I may not linger on such thoughts. History proves this truth, that there is a transcendent instinct in human nature, which urges it to a nobler goal. The development of mankind is not to be explained by the hypothesis that man is only a finite being; virtue but a refinement of egoism; religion but a cheat. Our toil is not in vain, gentlemen. Whatever the author of *The Book of Ecclesiastes* may have said, in a moment of depression, science is not the worst pursuit which God has given to the sons of men. It is the best. If all is vanity, he who devotes his life to Truth will not be more deceived than others. If Truth and well-being are real, and of that we are assured beyond all contradiction, they who search for them and love them, are they who will have lived best.

Gentlemen, we shall not meet again: in my next lecture I shall go into the depths

of Hebrew Philology, where the greater part of you will not accompany me. But you who are young, to whom I may allow myself to offer counsel and advice, will be here to listen to me. The active zeal which animates you, and which has shewn itself more than once during this lecture in a manner so flattering to me, is praiseworthy in principle, and of good omen; but do not let it degenerate into frivolous agitation. Turn to solid studies; believe that true science is, above all, the result of cultivation of the mind, nobility of heart, independence of judgment. Prepare for our country generations ripe in all things which constitute the glory and ornament of life. Guard against unreflecting impulses, and remember that liberty can only be achieved by seriousness, respect for yourselves and for others, devotion to the public weal, and to that special work which each of us is sent into the world to commence or to continue.

THE END.

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